MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

#343 – DEC – 2011 $4 US/CAN

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

MARIAM BASTANI

- SHOPPERS-Silver Year-LP
- CONDOMINIUM-Warm Home-LP
- NEMESIS-Dou-Koku-EP
- LOS MONJO/RULETA RUSA-split EP
- NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE-Panic-EP
- SMÄRTSTILLANDE-1-flexi EP
- SUDOR-Ganas De Vomitar-LP
- MAGOOS-EP / RIPPER-LP
- HOAX-Down-EP+live
- COKE BUST-live

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- HOAX-Down-EP+live
- CONDOMINIUM-Warm Home-LP
- DEATH TOKEN-All Dreams Are Nightmares-LP
- NIGHT BIRDS-Other Side Of Darkness-LP
- NEMESIS-Dou-Koku-EP
- SHOPPERS-Silver Year-LP
- SYSTEMATIC DEATH-Systema-8-EP
- SEIKŌ-Come Inside-EP
- BAD NOIDS-Ticket To Mars-EP
- BRAINOIL-Death Of This Dry Season-LP

TIM BROOKS

- KITCHEN'S FLOOR-Look Forward To Nothing-LP
- LIVING EYES-Starve For Agony-EP
- BASTARD-Controlled In The Frame-EP
- CHAOS UK-LP
- GIUDA-Number 10/Crazee-45
- SUDOR-Ganas De Vomitar-LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE-LP
- OBN IIIS-The One And Only-LP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY/DEFECT DEFECT/FOREIG...-split LP
- HYENA-Breathing Death, Rotting Flesh-EP

MITCH CARDWELL

- ROYAL HEADACHE-LP
- BURNING ITCH-LP
- PENETRATORS-Gotta Have Her/Baby...-45
- LAURICE-Best Of Laurice Vol. 1-LP
- TRUE SONS OF THUNDER-LP
- OBN IIIS-The One And Only-LP
- JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT-45
- SLUGZ-Suit And Tie-EP
- OUTDOORSMEN-Violent Hands-EP
- LOUD SQUIRT-Déjà Vu Revue Blues-EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- HUNTING PARTY-demo
- BRAINOIL-Death Of This Dry Season-LP+live
- LIVING EYES-Starve For Agony-EP
- SYSTEMATIC DEATH-EP / RIPPER-LP
- DEATH CRISIS-live / CONDOMINIUM-LP
- STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS-LP / KOMATOZ-LP
- BLACK BUG-EP / BURNING SONS-12"
- DEATH TOKEN-All Dreams Are Nightmares-LP
- NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE-EP+flexi
- NEMESIS-Dou-Koku-EP

SEAN "DOUGIE" DOUGAN

- GIUDA-Number 10/Crazee-45
- XRAY EYEBALLS-Sundae/Déjà Vu-45
- OBN IIIS-The One And Only-LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE-LP
- NIGHT BIRDS-Other Side Of Darkness-LP
- ATOM NOTES-Spare Parts-LP
- ACID BABY JESUS-LP
- LIBERTY MADNESS-LP
- CHAOS UK-LP
- VACANT STATE-Fill The Void-LP

LAYLA GIBBON

- CRAZY BAND-Fuck You-LP
- SHOPPERS-Silver Year-LP
- SUDOR-Ganas De Vomitar-LP
- BRAIN F≠-Sleep Rough-LP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY/DEFECT DEFECT/FOREIG...-split LP
- CONDOMINIUM-Warm Home-LP
- LA LA VASQUEZ/NEONATES-split EP
- BLACK BUG-Shard Of Glass-EP
- LOS MONJO/RULETA RUSA-split EP
- LAURICE-LP / LOBOTOMIA-LP

DAN GOETZ

- NOOSE-live
- COKE BUST-live / NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE-flexi EP
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY/DEFECT DEFECT/FOREIG...-split LP
- BASTARD-Controlled In The Frame-EP
- HAGAR THE WOMB-A Brighter Shade Of Black-LP
- SYSTEMATIC DEATH-Systema-8-EP
- MOUTHBREATHERS-Anxiety/The Creeper-45
- KITCHEN'S FLOOR-LP / BRAIN F≠-LP
- STATE VIOLENCE-both EPs / TERRIBLE FEELINGS-EP
- ZERO PROGRESS-live

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See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

BOB GOLDIE

NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-We Own The Night...-45
STATE VIOLENCE-both EPs
BALLADMEN-Gingerale-EP
HOAX-Down-EP
LIVING EYES-Starve For Agony-EP
THE IMPOSTERS-Down By The Bay-EP
NIGHT BIRDS-Other Side Of Darkness-LP
NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE-both EPs
VACANT STATE-Fill The Void-LP
UX VILEHEADS-Hardcore XI-LP

KENNY KAOS

THE BAM BAMS-Runaways-EP
THE KONKS-TV's Killing Me/Wasn't That Fun-45
ZYGOTEENS-Sleeping With The Stereo On-EP
FLESH LIGHTS-Muscle Pop-LP
THE PEGS-Nobody's Listening Anyway-EP
SLUGZ-Suit And Tie-EP
NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-We Own The Night...-45
MOUTHBREATHERS-Anxiety/The Creeper-45
THE KAMALAS-The Great Hallucination-EP
THE IMPOSTERS-Down By The Bay-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

THE KONKS-TV's Killing Me/Wasn't That Fun-45
ZOUNDS-Singles Box Set
ROYAL HEADACHE-LP+live
KITCHEN'S FLOOR-Look Forward To Nothing-LP
BLACK BUG-Shard Of Glass-EP
PUFFY AREOLAS-EP / MOUTHBREATHERS-45
WILD BILLY CHILDISH AND THE SPARTAN DREGGS-CD
SINGING DOGS-Deja Voodoo Blues-10"
JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT-45
LAURICE-Best Of Laurice Vol. 1-LP

RAY LUJAN

BALLOON FLIGHTS-CD / THE BAM BAMS-EP
BRAIN F≠-Sleep Rough-LP
COBRA SKULLS-CD / CRAZY BAND-LP
THE GARRISON-CD / HAGAR THE WOMB-LP
THE HEADLINES-EP / THE KAMALAS-EP
NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-We Own The Night...-45
OLD WIVES-CD / REBEL CITY RADIO-CD
ROYAL HEADACHE-LP
SPOONBOY-CD / THEE SPIVS-CD
MIDDLE CLASS-live / POISON IDEA-live

MARISSA MAGIC

IN ANOTHER STATE, ANOTHER STATE OF MIND

FRED SCHRUNK

YOUR PEST BAND-Ground Zero-EP
BRAIN F≠-Sleep Rough-LP
HAGAR THE WOMB-A Brighter Shade Of Black-LP
SHOPPERS-Silver Year-LP
DAYLIGHT ROBBERY/DEFECT DEFECT/FOREIG...-split LP
TERRIBLE FEELINGS-Tied Up/No Meaning-45
CONDOMINIUM-Warm Home-LP
CRAZY BAND-Fuck You-LP
OFF DAYS/UH-OH-split EP
NIGHT BIRDS-Other Side Of Darkness-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

SUDOR-Ganas De Vomitar-LP
HOAX-Down-EP
OUTDOORSMEN-Violent Hands-EP
EMPTY HEADS-Get Real Dumb/Josie-45
STATE VIOLENCE-Sexual Napalm-EP
DEATH TOKEN-All Dreams Are Nightmares-LP
SMÄRTSTILLANDE-1-flexi EP
SÄNKT-Kaos I Skallen-flexi EP
NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE-Panic-EP
NEMESIS-Dou-Koku-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

Accept The Darkness #7 Ratcharge #25 split
Antipatia #20, #21, #22, #23
Teenage Waste #1
Equalizing x Distort Vol. 11 #3, #4
Trust #149
Map Of Fog #3
Razorcake #64
Zine Explorer's Notebook #2
Dosis Mortal #1
XXV #15

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable; Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops. Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue. with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/ Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports.
Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#331/December '10. Kylmä Sota, Articles of Faith, Total Abuse, La Merma, Doña Maldad, Frankie Rose and the Outs, Little League, Versificator, Frankfurt Germany Scene Report, Belgium Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report w/Weird TV, White Boss, Milk Music, HPP, Hysterics, Son Skull, Rvivr, Hail Seizures, Broken Water, Gun Outfit.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report

#335/April '11. Crazy Spirit, Siege. 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/ Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.:'80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cokskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise Records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/ Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History pt 2.

#340/September '11.Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Unlearn, Deaf Club Oral History, Final part of the Czech Punk History.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires and Graces.

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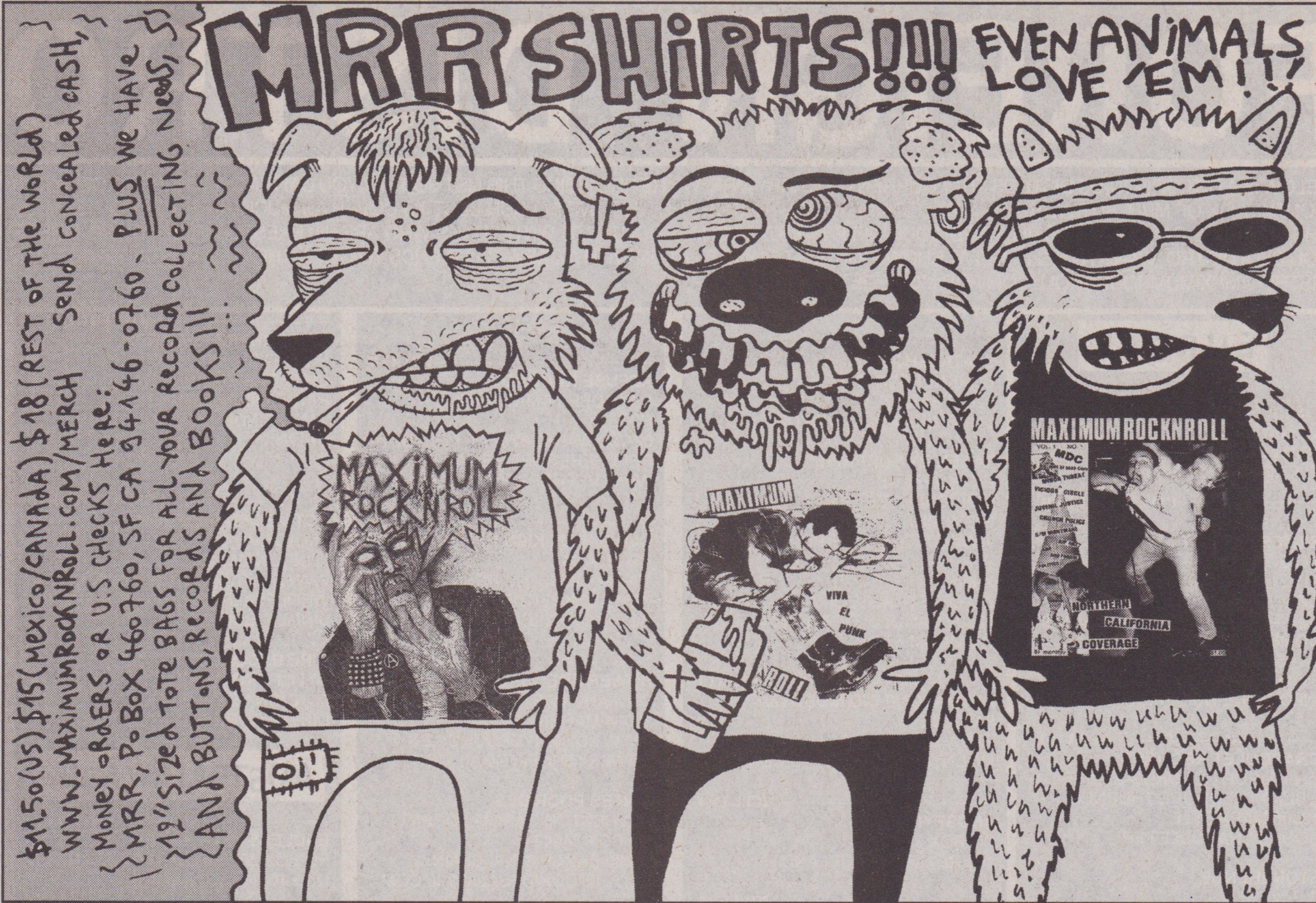
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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—

Well I'm sending this email because I have been HIV positive for five years now. In the five years I have not met or found any groups (support groups) that are HIV positive or who have AIDS that are punks. I have looked all over the internet and can not find anything, I have asked friends to see if they knew of anything about positive punx through there networks and friends and came up with nothing. I'm kind of desperate and really want to find punx who are in the same situation as I am. I really don't care if it has anything do with politics; I am just searching for a support group of the same kin. I have read your magazine on and off since being a teenager (I'm 27 now) and know that your magazine is read worldwide. So I'm hoping that with all the friends and contacts you guys have made over the years you might know about something or someone. Thanx

Up the punx!

—uptheproles36@yahoo.com

Dear MRR—

MRR has really been on their A game as of late as far as I'm concerned. Just a thank you letter here…

1- I'm a little late, but thank you George Tabb for your column on Raybeez. I was fortunate to see WARZONE in the late '80s. My first memory was a packed show at WUST hall in DC with probably a 1000 crazy kids and a show I'll never forget. I want to guess it was '97-ish on their last tour before he passed, but I was at the Baltimore MD show. There were maybe twelve people there and the man gave it his all. He was such a pleasant person to converse with after the show.

2- This issue's Brace Belden article—It hit home with me. An article I can really relate to in so many ways.

3- Mariam's article… I've been to San Fran a few times but calling *MRR* and being able to stop in and see the compound for some reason seemed unrealistic. Your article really inspires me at age 41 to always continue to believe in punk rock and hardcore.

Thanks so much. I'm so appreciative of you people keeping it real and going strong.

—Mike

Thanks so Much!!!!

Dear MRR—

My zine, "Embarrazine #3 & 4" got reviewed in the November 2011 issue. However, my mailing address is listed incorrectly, any chance the review could be reprinted in the next issue with my correct address? It was probably my fault, my handwriting is dreadful.

If it is possible my address is:
Max Wheeler
95 Central Ave
Athens, OH 45701

Dear MRR—

While I really do appreciate the positive review given to the Knot Music cassette compilation *The Here and Now Comp* in the November issue, I do want to point out to readers that the address given at the end of the review was incorrect. To grab a copy of the compilation, send $3 (postpaid in USA) to Knot Music/ PO Box 501/. South Haven MI 49090-0501, USA. Please add a couple of bucks if you're outside the USA. Other than that, keep up the good work, my friends!

Thanks,

—Andrew Lersten / Vilently Ill / head honcho at Knot Music

Dear MRR—

Ramsey Kanaan's review of the Shenkin Punx CD is one of the most biased and uncool things I think *MRR* has ever printed since I've been reading. There is no mention of the music other than that it is shit. That doesn't tell me much. The lack of musical criticism in the music review isn't my problem though. My real problem is that the band is criticized for not being outright anti-apartheid. WTF? *MRR* is printed in America and I am from Canada. I don't see any reviews that tear down particular bands from North America because their *music* is lacking in substantive criticisms of our two countries' heinous foreign and domestic human rights history. Unless a band claims to be political, which I garnered form the review that Shenkin Punx do not, then why should a review of their *music* consist solely of a lambasting of their lack of political stance? Furthermore, as I mentioned above, the only mention of the music as being shit is a pretty debasing way to give a band what is supposed to be a criticism of their musical integrity. The expectation that just because a band is from Israel they *must* be speaking out against apartheid is ridiculous. It's music. I'd like to add that I believe that what Israel is doing is wrong but it's American money that makes it possible. The mention of complicity leaves most people on this continent in a relatively unfit position to level such criticisms at a punk band. I'm for fair and balanced journalism as well, but this review is in all senses, "unprofessional."

—Matt Hargrove

Dear MRR—

It's been five years since you've had one of my whinging "DIY" letters and bugger me if things aren't still the same! Basically, I run a mail order in the UK and it's the same old case of labels getting ideas above their station, refusing to trade, ridiculous wholesale rates, etc. Things are fucking *bleak* out there. We have one of the most deranged Conservative governments I can ever remember—people are struggling to pay the rent (landlords taking the piss), pay the gas bill (energy companies allowed to just grab a figure out of the air and charge it – yet another 18% rise this year), in debt up to their eyeballs to a backdrop of wage freezes and benefit cuts.

In short, money is scarcer than ever, and whether you're a distro, a label or even a band, you can't just expect to sit back and let the money roll in. My new release, *Bruised Knuckles Vs Savage Amusement* is, on the face of it, commercial suicide. It's a compilation CD. But the effort that's gone into it in both getting the sound and artwork right, wading through loads of mediocre shit to get to the good stuff, and trying to get unreleased tracks (Barse & Gimp Fist amongst others) is immense. And while, yes, it is predominantly an Oi! CD (with '77 style punk, streetpunk, reggae, ska and even a soul type number) we have made sure there are no dodgy bands on it (and that is easier said than done in the UK these days, believe me) and you may not realise it but even the old anarcho crowd like a bit of Oi!—as long as it doesn't sound like a *Daily Mail* reading granddad, which the CD sure as hell isn't!

Yet time after time it's "No we can't trade – we really need to *sell* the stuff." Yeah, *me too*! But the real world does not work like that. Gone are the days when you could shift 1000 direct to punter at maximum price (unless it's Cock Sparrer or something). I could understand if it was a sickly sweet Blink 182 wanna be radio friendly piece of shit (I wouldn't touch it with a bargepole either). But it's not. And *your* stuff is not Cock Sparrer. And I don't want to be sitting here with 649 copies or something in two years time.

Sorry for the rant. Any true DIY labels who put out '77 style punk, streetpunk, '82 style punk, or crust / D-beat, '80s type HC, for fucks sake get in touch (but please no emo or college pop punk shite!!)!! And if you *do* have the big names, that's no problem, we can do a deal to make it worth yer while. Full info/tracklisting is on Discogs, and my address is – trevhagl@hotmail.com

Good to see *MRR* at least is still the same (I could do without the small type in places mind you!)

—Trev Hagl
Savage Amusement

Hi MRR—

I just got back from working in the Netherlands and another parcel from the *MRR* house — you have sent this record twice by mistake! I am waiting to hear from some folk who should want a copy of this record, when I know who wants it I will send another payment to you, but might take a few weeks. Yes an honest punk—we still exist! Just got *MRR* 342—so glad I got an advance email from Mike Inimical about the Arctic Flowers LP — it rules but why was it so limited? Now on its 3rd pressing!!

All the best and will send cash soon with luck,

—Tom FreeFall

Update: Tom sent us a paypal for the cash in three days. He decided to purchase the comp LP for is friend's birthday present. Thanks Tom!
—Mariam

Hello MRR—

If you could pass this email onto Marissa that would be great, thank you! We saw the review you wrote for our *Love Attack* 7" and wanted to thank you for so many kind words!! We were really flattered by the references too! If you want to hear anything more that we've recorded/released or want to know anything more about us please get in touch. By the way we hope to make it over next to America to tour next year (we're from Glasgow in Scotland!)—hope the offer of playing in your house will still be good! :)

—Andy / Divorce

Hey MRR—

Just want to say that Diatribe has had a great year playing shows with so many kick ass bands—seeing old friends and making many more new ones. Thanks to everyone for coming out to the shows and all the support and good times. We are looking forward to this next year. It's gonna be a good one, I can feel it!

Thanks a lot,
—Vinnie

Hey MRR—

Here's why the Asians in the *Heart of the City* are so funny. In the first part the protagonist is describing the things he perceives as negative in his neighborhood. There are people creeping around in doorways, drug dealers and, the last and presumably the worst – Asians! It's funny because it's ridiculous to most of us, but there's also an insight there — the scariest thing in the world for some people is dealing with people of another culture. The throwback clothing exemplifies the prejudices of the main character.

As far as the prostitute goes I don't know if it's common knowledge that "tranny" is a negative term. In any case, depicting one prostitute as unattractive is not an insult to all sex workers. None of the characters in the strip are good looking.

And the "bros and hoes" refers to young partying white people who are generally fair game for ridicule. I have yet to see anyone in the punk scene stand up for them.

I shudder to think how many books and movies you would be happy to censor if you can't process a simple cartoon. And what about the punk scene? Wouldn't an African American homosexual who had dealt with homophobia all his life likely be offended by seeing the band name Black Fag on a flyer? Could the Clitfest possibly be seen as boiling women down to one body part? What if just one person thought so? The Nip Drivers? Crippled Children Suck?

Tim used to call bands out on their shit and it was awesome. But lately the mag is getting overly sensitive. Chastising tall punks for not standing in back at a show. Really? And what is brocore? At first I assumed it meant Victory Records macho crap but now it seems like any all-male band or any show where a female doesn't hit the stage carries the label. It reads like an insult. There's a discrepancy in the number of women involved in punk, rap and rock n roll in general. Don't pin the blame on some thirteen-year-old kid who just bought a Spazz record and decided to start a band.

Aspiring young punks are gonna pick up *MRR* and be hit with so many rules and accusations (not to mention contradictions) that they'll forget about the real scene and go running back to Blink 182.

Yours truly
—Joey Joe Joe Junior Shabadoo

I wasn't going to respond to this. Not because the issue at hand is irrelevant nor because we have been talking about this a lot much to the chagrin of many MRR *readers nor was my possible lack of response due to the honestly weak argument you made, but because you decided to use an alias. That is some weak and cowardly shit. You wanna speak for all the poor oppressed punk kids? How about speaking for yourself first… With that said, I have to say that this is ridiculous…*

First— "the scariest thing in the world for some people is dealing with people of another culture." Really? If that is the scariest thing in the world, well my friend, you don't have shit for problems. Not to say that it is not intimidating to deal with people of other cultures for fear of miscommunication, potentially being a dumbass, highlighting your ignorance. Yeah, that can be scary… Why don't you fucking ask somebody? I am open! I bet others are too!

Second— I propose you start a campaign to unite punks to defend the very underrepresented and oppressed group that we all know need our support and have common values as many punks have… "young white party goers." Seriously, shut the fuck up. I think many of us that do love to party can agree that being a "party goer" does not categorize you into some marginalized group.

Third— You wanna see censorship in action? Reread your letter. I didn't realize that debate was somehow inhibiting your right to believe and do what the hell you wanna do. Before you start speaking for an "African American homosexual," women, etc… Why don't you ask them what offends them instead of assuming that you know better that they do. That somehow being offended in any form shows a lack of intelligence or understanding about ones own place in the world. Or that decisions they may make in regards to the representation of their own culture is somehow to be arbitrated by you… Orientalism? Anyone?

Fourth— "brocore" Hmmm… I don't remember any one making some sweeping mandate calling for the neutering of any bands that have dudes in them nor do I remember condemning all bands with males in them (cis or otherwise). I love dick and this mag is full of it, so perhaps you and I are looking at a different magazine?

Fifth— It seems to me that the mindset that you have is overly sensitive, not the other way around. There are a whole lot of different opinions in these pages, none of which are weak. Nor are any of the people who have voiced their opinion about any of the various "isms" that have affected their lives. It's just the opposite. It's about learning to stand up, make decisions and know that sometimes what others pass off as a joke or cool is, in actuality, not at all.

And that, my friend, is the ONLY thing that we want to pass on to that thirteen-year-old kid who just bought a Spazz record and decided to start a band. There is nothing wrong with knowing more about the world, you don't have to listen to anyone… don't be afraid of learning shit and fucking up… make your own fucking way… trust your gut and don't let any motherfucker tell you what's up… Including me and including you, (alias).

One Love,
—Mariam

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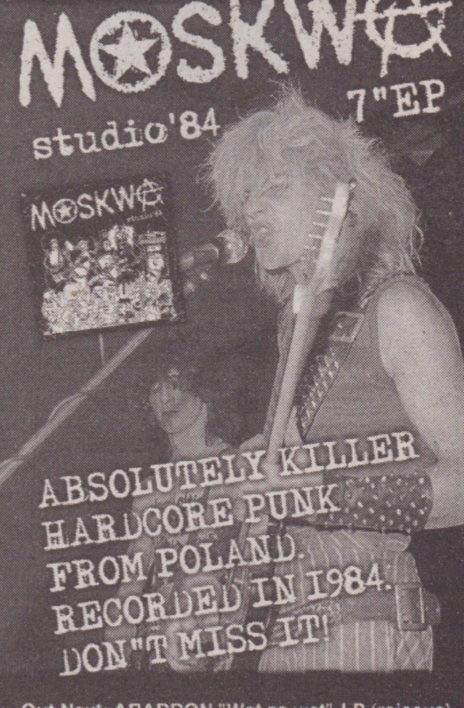

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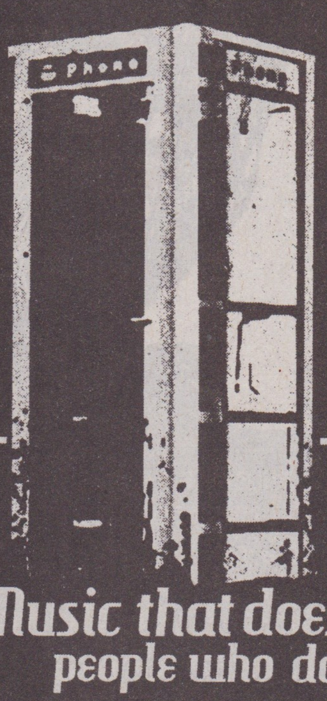

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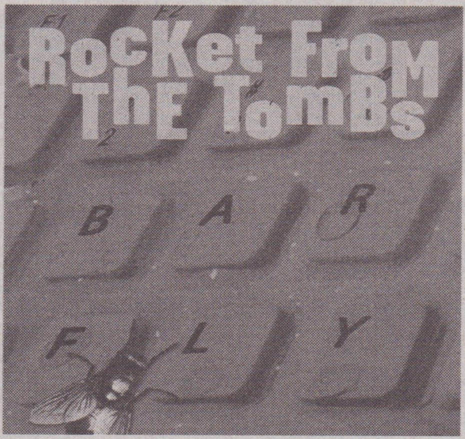

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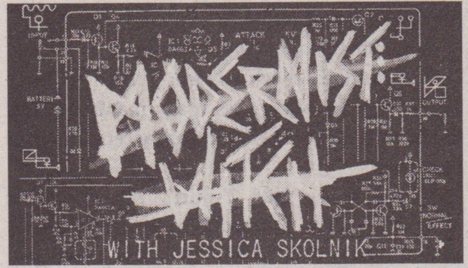


DIY: Ideal, Reality, and Responsibility (Work and Non-Work)

The reality of DIY punk spaces is that they have always existed wherever they possibly can or could, most often in spaces that moneymaking ventures find undesirable (who among us has the capital to compete)? We put on shows in basements and lofts, at places with bad plumbing and exposed wires and busted-out windows, at whatever church or studio or pizza place or bar will let us do so. Because we don't have the luxury of designing ideal spaces for shows (sometimes even spaces that have existed for many, many years and have been modified as much as possible aren't ideal), I see two major physical accessibility issues with a lot of spaces, neither of which are really within our ability as punks to fix on a significant scale.

Those issues are:

1- Direct physical accessibility issues – significant numbers of stairs, for instance

2- Transportation issues – spaces that are hard to get to by existing public transportation, for instance

I'm not writing this column to call anyone out for booking shows at spaces with these kinds of accessibility issues (or other issues – I'd be interested in hearing about what similar issues you're running into in your community); the large percentage of people I know who book shows (myself included) do it with the best of intentions. I'm writing this column in hopes that some of you astute readers have some creative ideas to help remedy these issues, ideas that might work in some communities but not others, ideas that might work in all communities. How have you worked with these issues?

For issues that are so astonishingly common, I don't hear them discussed all that much outside of, say, show collectives and individual conversations. That might really speak to the fact that they are so ubiquitous as to almost be invisible and so difficult to work with since we really have to use the spaces we have (and there aren't enough of those as it is). I can't help feeling that a more global conversation about this stuff might be helpful in some way (obviously that's the idealist/activist in me speaking). I am always sad when I hear that someone in our community can't attend one of these shows.

These issues arise, in the end, out of one of the core values that is so wonderful and yet so frustrating about punk, something we've all debated in these pages and in private conversations – the refusal to wholly capitulate to a capitalist system. At a base level, though, we have to operate in the same world as everyone else, in which money is exchanged for goods and services. It costs money to buy the tools to make music (assuming you own your own gear; sharing is an option sometimes but not always), to record, to tour, to press vinyl or make cassettes, to rent or own a space to put on shows, to rent or own a PA. I have always personally done what I can out of my own pockets; I have never wanted to make money at this game and have always seen making music as a labor of love. I give what I can, but my own pockets only run so deep, as do yours. This is why we end up with spaces that aren't ideal in many ways. We take what we can get.

This is one of the reasons I go out of my way to support touring bands that I like financially, to support local businesses and show spaces, record labels I love and so on. In my time booking shows, though, I've encountered a lot of people who don't see putting money back into the community and sharing it with friends and with people who are working hard at their crafts as a responsibility of sorts to help keep the community running if you can afford to do so. These are the people who come and *expect* to get in to a house show with one or more touring bands for free for any reason other than genuinely not being able to afford it.

There's work, too – time and energy and skills as a useful resource to offer the community. Where would we be without people who stayed behind to clean up show spaces, who came over to stuff records, who offered car rides to hard-to-get-to shows? I do amp repair for cost of parts only (if parts are required that I don't already have lying around.) My challenge to you – and to myself, too – in this column is to think of ways that we are using and can use our unique skills and experiences to enrich the community around us and to maybe get around some of the barriers to accessibility I've mentioned above. I was thinking earlier, for example, that if I had a woodshop and better woodworking skills I'd try to put together wheelchair ramps from whatever remaindered wood I had around. This is not a perfect solution for show spaces that really need elevators to be truly accessible, but a step in the right direction (they'd be doubly useful for getting certain giant heavy amps up to where they need to go, too).

Obviously, these are not new ideas, and the DIY punk scene hasn't sustained itself as long as it has without these idea[l]s already being out there being worked through, discussed, and used. But again, I think all of this bears working through in a public forum like this one now and again, because we often tend toward inertia (I know I do), and without active conversations I'm not kept thinking about ways that I can use my resources beyond what I am already doing. I think sometimes it's worthwhile to go back and revisit the reasons we're involved in this whole scene/community in the first place, to refresh ourselves, to challenge ourselves, to think of how the challenges posed to us in whatever roles we occupy have changed over the years based on macro-issues like the economy and current events as well as micro-issues like our own personal positions, situations, and locations (and how they've remained fairly constant in other ways).

I'll leave you with this seemingly unrelated and very sweet anecdote from the show my band played last night: at some point someone played "Six Pack" over the PA and I looked out at my mom, who was standing right up front (this was the first time she'd seen this band; I don't see my parents that often these days) and she was bopping from side to side and maybe even singing along. (Mom!) It was a very small and charming moment to me, my childhood meeting my adulthood by way of my teenagerhood, and it reminded me of the reason I got involved in all of this in the first place, reasons I've written about here before — it was a home to me, it was where I found music and people that made me feel excited and challenged, where I found a set of aesthetics that was attractive to me, where I could express the considerable anger and frustration and sadness I had inside as a teenager. That roiling storm has lessened considerably and abstracted itself over the years. I'm still pissed about a lot of the same things but from a different angle, if that makes any sense. This is also now where so many of my friends and loved ones are, part of this community, people with similar values and ethics to mine, people who work hard at making art and/or making the world a not-so-shitty place to be for themselves and for others.

Anyway, I was watching my mom and thinking about how I'd written about my parents in this very column and what a treat it is to have family who are actually interested in my interests, especially when my interests often revolve around what can be a "weird," intimidating, closed-off but constantly evolving, somewhat daunting subculture. I started thinking about connections and how we make meaning, how we often do things to make the world a worthwhile place to live in – whatever that means to us – as a survival strategy. I started thinking about why I believe so strongly in the capacity of others to do good for our communities and ourselves if we choose to and have the abilities to do so. If I didn't hang onto that belief I probably would have killed myself in one way or another many years ago (no exaggeration). This is weird for me to say as an introvert, as someone who absolutely cherishes and needs her alone time, but connection with others, even if it isn't being utilized at that particular moment, is obviously one of the key things that we all need to some extent as humans.

So we return to the challenge I posed initially in this column – how do we keep the art and connections we have with others alive? How do we divide, share and use our resources and skills? Where are our personal priorities? (You might not share mine, obviously, but I suspect that at least some of y'all do to some extent.) How do we nurture that which is dear to us? If working toward a more equitable society is important to you, how do you practice that on a day-to-day basis both within and without punk? I know the things I do, and I know that I can do more, know that I am just beginning to really push myself.

MRR: Do you get »
George Tabb sez
Take my life, please!

"George Tabb?" the housepainter guy asks me as I exit our home library, AKA the bathroom. I was halfway through reading an interview with Paul Rudd, who I think is funny, in *Playboy*.

I mean, come on, *Dinner for Schmucks* was amazing. And Rudd is great at playing the straight guy with the funny sidekick. Like Abbot and Costello. Laurel and Hardy. Obama and Biden. Actually, as Willy Wonka would say regarding the last one, "Strike That, Reverse It."

Also, I've gotten to that point in my life where I actually *read* Playboy. Really. I don't care much for the pictures anymore. Geez, when I saw Nirvana play their early shows, these girls were sperm.

And who knows, maybe one of them was even lucky enough to have been mine. That thought keeps me awake at night.

Doh.

Anyway, so my girlfriend asks the painter-guy, Dave, how he knows who I am. He tells her he sees my Furious George T-shirt.

Double Doh.

As we talk about CBGB and stuff, I keep thinking I wish I was talking about what fucking color the walls should be, but my stupid my T-shirt gave me away. I used to love wearing my punk rock T-shirts. I wore them with pride. With honor. With a sense of humor. But now *everyone* has a damn CBGB or Ramones T-shirt. And half these people don't even know that the initials are for a club and the Ramones are a band, not a brand of Cuban cigars.

When you ask these people why they are wearing the shirt, the response is usually, "I don't know what it is, but it's cool, and everyone else wears one." Or, "my boy/girlfriend got it for me."

I don't know about you, but I like to know what I'm advertising on my chest. Even if it's just for Barbie's Dream House, I want to know.

Also, I really love funny T-shirts. The ones that are parodies. That mock other shirts or logos. They are funny, and it's fun to see people's reactions.

But there was this one shirt I got a few years back that was so simple and almost lame, I thought about not even wearing it. But I did. Because it was kind of funny. I just wish everyone else thought the same.

Well, those on the left coast, anyway.

***

"Beelzebub: King of Fear" is what the front of my black long sleeve shirt reads. Beelzebub is in white letters, behind a red banner. An obvious parody of a Budweiser shirt. Obvious, at least, to me. And most New Yorkers. But oh no. Not to Californians. Know why? Because California is a pussy state.

I came to this conclusion very recently when I was forced, by Jewish and family guilt, to fly across the fucking country and land in a city that wants to make street talk an official language. Oakland.

Most dictionaries don't even have the words "fuck", "shit", "cocksucker" or "pussy." I know. I always look for them.

***

So, I'm at JFK airport at 7:30 AM. Groggy, cranky, and constipated because I can't get myself going that early in the morning. I'm wearing my leather jacket with the US pins, black jeans, black sneakers, and my "Beelzebub" shirt. No big deal. It's fucking New York. The drag queens and Middle Eastern visitors are getting more looks. I walk into a bookstore and this Jewish guy stops me. I could tell he was Jewish 'cause he had that hat thing on his head.

A Yamaha. No, that's a motorcycle.

A yarmulke. Jewish Frisbee.

"Your shirt, what does it say man?" he says to me with a Yiddish/California accent. I look at him.

"Your shirt. Your T-shirt? What does it mean?" he says, now rubbing his little beard, and studying it. He looks like a rabbi I once met at an S&M club.

"It says, Beelzebub: King of Fear," I say to him.

"What is Beelzebub?" he asks. I know he knows.

"It's Satan. Lucifer. The Dark Prince. Damien. Oprah Winfrey".

He looks at me puzzled, then asks me why I am wearing a shirt with the devil on it. I look at his nice blue yarmulke, little beard, and suit and then ask him if he's from California. He tells me he is. I could tell.

"I wear the shirt," I explain to him, "because I drink the blood of small children, have goat's heads hanging on my wall, and love heavy metal."

"Oh," he says, shocked.

"It's a fuckin' joke," I say to him. For some reason I felt I had to explain myself to him.

"But Satan? Out in The Bay Area we have a saying...," he starts.

"Nice meeting you," I say, and leave quickly. This guy was pissing me off. I didn't wanna hear anything from any pussy at that hour in the morning. No coffee, no sleep. No shit.

My Future Ex-Wife and I arrive in California and rent a small car. The overly nice and happy guy who rents it to us is all smiles. As we are filling out the forms for the car, he asks us if we want insurance. We tell him our credit card covers it. At this point, most car rental places tell you that your card only covers certain things, and that you need to pay the extra ten dollars a day. But oh no. Not in pussy California. The guy tells us that it's cool we have a credit card, and that we don't need the insurance. I drive away from the place. Puzzled.

We wind up staying with some relatives in San Francisco and doing lots of family shit. Whenever I can, I get the hell away from that and travel around. Mostly to Burrito places, because that's all San Francisco is good for. Burritos. And

I always wear my "Beelzebub: King of Fear" shirt.

Everywhere.

One day, as I'm buying a book for my cousin in Hippie Hell Berkeley, the guy behind the counter just stares at my shirt.

"What's the matter?" I ask the guy with the Jerry Garcia shirt and the "I Recycle" button on his vest.

"Your shirt," he says, "It's offensive."

I tell him that this state is as well, and can I please have a bag for my cousin's book. "We don't have bags," he explains to me, with his nose in the air.

"I need a bag to carry this book, which I just purchased from your store," I explain to him.

"Bags are a waste of paper, and they're harmful to the environment," he explains to me.

Serious. I can't fucking believe this guy.

"Look, putz," I say, "This whole fucking store is full of wastes of paper. Look around you. How many trees do you think died for your little hipster shop?"

He says nothing, and hands me a plastic bag he takes out from under the counter.

"Have a nice day," I say to him as I leave him and his stupid store. Pussy.

Christmas Eve finds me in San Mateo, visiting some of the hundreds of relatives I'm forced to endure during my jaunt into a state that, I hope one day gracefully slides into the sea. Or becomes its own country.

"What's your shirt say?" asks some distant aunt or something, whose name I can't remember, 'cause they all look and smell the same anyway. And they all pinch my cheek, and ask when I'm gonna get a real life.

"It says, "Beelzebub: King of Fear" I say to the old lady and her perfume.

"What's a Beelzebub?" she asks, honestly not knowing.

Old people. They don't watch enough quality television.

"Basically," I explain, "it's the Devil."

"The Devil?" she asks.

"You know," I say, "that little guy on who runs around in those commercials, and lands on your can of corned beef."

"Oh," she says, then walks away.

Later that night, one of the old guys at the house asks me about my shirt. He may have been a relative. I'm not sure. Who cares.

"What does your shirt say, young man?" he asks, from behind his tinted glasses.

"Beelzebub: King of Fear," I say.

"I don't understand," he says, "what's Beelzebub?"

For some reason I go off on this guy. I tell him that what the fuck does he care what my damn shirt says, and why isn't he asking the dorks across the room about their "Tommy Hilfiger" shirts. Hell, that name is bigger than Beelzebub, and more offensive.

"Well," he says, daring to continue the conversation, "I know you are from New York, and you New Yorkers, well, just look at you, all dressed in black".

I look at my reflection in some glass doors that open out onto a patio with a hot tub. I am wearing all black. I then look around and see everyone in colors. Bright ones. It's disgusting. These people dress like, well, like their happy. Pussies.

"Beelzebub is Satan. The shirt is a joke. On Budweiser. Get it?" I ask the old guy.

"No," says my maybe distant uncle/grandfather/whatever, "I don't."

"Beer, Satan, you know," I try to explain.

But he doesn't get it. He just looks at me like some of the kids at Furious George shows. Pure puzzlement on their faces.

"Well, no matter," says the old guy, "you seem like a nice young guy, a bit high strung, but nice. Have a great stay out here." I thank him, slightly confused, and walk away.

On some rainy afternoon I park myself at a table at Pancho Villa, 16th Street between Valencia and Mission, the best burrito place in San Francisco. I'm eating a Super Carne Asada, reading some independent stupid newspaper that's fucking pro-Ebonics, and minding my own business.

"Hey, Beelzebub," says some guy with a mustache, black shirt, and dark jacket. He's with some California looking blonde. My guess, a stewardess.

"Howdy," I say, mouth full of lettuce, guac, salsa, cheese, whole pinto beans, tortilla, carne asada (that's beef, in 'Hisponics') and chips.

I wonder what the guy wants.

Probably to bother me about my shirt, so he and his sky waitress can laugh at me.

"Cool shirt, New York?" he asks.

"Yeah," I say, "How'd ya know?"

"Yo, Brooklyn," he says, and then shakes my hand. I swallow the lettuce, guac, salsa, cheese, whole pinto beans, tortilla, carne asada and chips. "King of Fear, awesome," he adds. And then he just walks away. Like that. Leaving me with my burrito and newspaper, stranded in the land of pussies. But I was happy to know there was some sanity out there.

***

The flight back home was at 1:55 p.m. on Virgin Air. How a record store was able to purchase an airline is beyond me. But whatever.

We return the car, and the same smiley guy tells us to have a safe trip home and come visit again. When we get to the airport, I point my finger northeast and say, "G.T. go home, G.T. go home." My Future Ex-Wife tells me to cut it out, and that she was sick of hearing that the whole trip.

"G.T. go home," I replied.

We go to Gate One, after having to check our bags. Seated across from us are this guy and girl. He's wearing purple and pink silk clothes, as is she. He's all hairy. As is she. He's eating some hippie vegetarian food, as is she. He sees me looking at him, and then looks back at me. I watch him read my shirt.

Then he looks me in the face. Dead serious. Here we go, I figure. The California-pussy curse out. He's gonna call me a useless punk. A New York asshole. A city slicker. He's gonna tell me to recycle, that leather means the death of innocent cows, and that Ebonics is essential to the advancement of humanity.

But he doesn't do any of that. He just holds up his forefinger and pinkie, and gives me the devil or "ruling" sign. Then smiles. I "rule" him back. Nice guy, for a pussy.

Then G.T. go home.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. I know it's expensive, but *All Access: The Rock N Roll Photography of Ken Regan* is one kick as book! Actually, it's the coolest rock photo book I've ever seen. Nice pictures of everyone from The Stones to The Clash to Iggy Pop. Lots of old geezers, I know, but still way cool.
2. Speaking of old geezers in rock photo books, I just got the reprint of Bri Hurley's classic 1980s NYHC book *Making A Scene*. This time there are more pictures and words. Some even by me. So get this book. It's actually very cool and great to see *lots* of old friends. It's funny, I run into them on the street once in a while and some of them look so, well, old! I mean, what, it's only been 25 years. That's nothing!
3. Thanks to the guys at Florida's Dying Records for putting out a Roach Motel compilation! Punk Rock!
4. Finally, It's been two seasons of the new guy on Dr. Who. What do you guys think? Me? I want David Tennant back! And more Torchwood!!

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIÈCLE ANGST

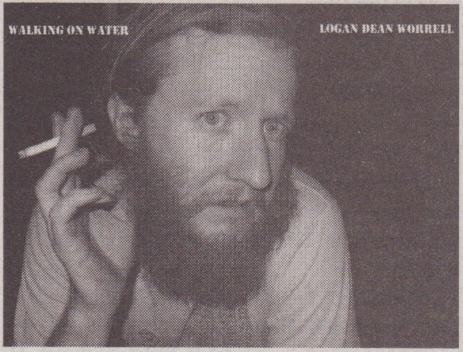
Here I am back in print after a few months off. As I've written before, aside from hardcore punk and Russian history, my main area of interest is early 20th century architecture and decorative art. I will admit to being somewhat fixated on the late 19th and early 20th centuries. To me, there is a certain appeal of the era leading up to and just after the Great War of 1914. Indeed, this column is entitled "fin de siècle angst" after a critic's description of Munch's "The Scream." While much of my youth was spent studying the class struggle, warfare, and strife of that era, as I got older I started to broaden my scope a bit. Since I work by day as a contractor remodeling late 19th and early 20th century houses, I long ago became interested in architecture, design, and the built environment of the gilded age. I took some night classes on architectural history and historic building preservation and my interest deepened. This has led me to an interest in furniture, interior décor, and the decorative arts that matched the style. These days I'm probably more excited about antique shows and house tours than record swaps and house shows. Fear not, my flame burns on, but I got a pretty good response when I wrote about furniture last time so here goes.

I am particularly enthusiastic about the early 20th century "arts and crafts" style, the Prairie School, the Viennese Secession, and Art Nouveau. Here in the upper Midwest we have many of the greatest examples of the Prairie School. Frank Lloyd Wright and Gustav Stickley were both from Wisconsin, and my personal favorites the dynamic duo Purcell and Elmslie, practiced here in Minneapolis. Many of Wright's and some of Purcell and Elmslie's homes are open to the public and more are featured on annual tours as special events. Going on these tours gives one a chance to fully experience in three dimensions of the architects' vision and talent. In touring a particularly great home, I am struck with the same awe as by a great piece of music. Indeed, one has to stand in the midst of an architectural masterpiece to fully appreciate it, and to experience the full scope of what the architect was trying to convey with space, light, massing, and details with their design. You just can't experience this from a book or a website, the same way you can't "feel" a great song reading sheet music or looking at a record cover.

This summer my wife and I went on vacation to the UK, and one of my main goals on this trip was to study the English Arts and Crafts style by touring museums and historic homes. I studied up for the trip and booked tours of quite a few historic homes. Some of the high points for me were touring the works of two of my favorite British architects CFA Voysey and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Particularly breathtaking were Voysey's "Blackwell House" and all of Mackintosh's work. CR Mackintosh was a giant with few peers; he was one of the most talented and visionary artists and designers. To my mind, his work — though 100 years old — still looks like it's from the future. Most of his work was in or around his native Glasgow from the last decade of the 19th century up to the outbreak of the Great War. Mackintosh integrated influences from English and American Arts and Crafts, as well as contemporaneous European Art Nouveau and most especially the Viennese Secession and German Jugenstil. Along with his wife Margaret MacDonald, he created some of the most breathtaking interiors for both residential and commercial settings. While his decorative work has been somewhat cheapened by it's commercialized use for everything from coasters to jewelry, if you take the time to look at the interiors, furniture, and building commissions of Mackintosh you can see the work of a true genius and visionary.

Most architects are commissioned to design a home only; rarely do their patrons have the budget or inclination to also have them design the furniture and interiors. In the case of Mackintosh and Voysey, however, remarkably well preserved examples of their work are on display showing the genius of their design, as well as the furniture and décor they intended to complete the package. The end result fully conveys the vision of the artist and the "complete package" that a home designed by a great architect but then furnished haphazardly never fully conveys. Here in the US only the interiors of Wright and Purcell and Elmslie have come close in the sense of awe they have imparted on me, with the level of detail and thought put into every aspect of the siting, design, lighting, furnishing, finishes, etc. When you stand in the center of a house that's a great work of art, it starts to sink in how vastly different is the build environment in which most people today live. Cramped beehive apartments, tasteless suburban tract homes, tawdry condo developments, cheap and trashy townhomes, and the like are the order of the day for most people. Soaking in what a great architect can create with the proper resources begins to help us understand the role of architecture and the aesthetic in the build environment. Those little details, all adding up to a symbiotic whole, help set the stage for a more elevated lifestyle for the occupants.

Enough of that, let's get on to music. I used to spend a lot of time in this zine writing about what were then cult/obscure bands whose records had dropped off the map. Now you can hear even the most obscure record online and *MRR* does an outstanding job of covering every subgenre of new and exciting bands from far-flung parts of the globe. So I will turn instead, to the most basic and perhaps nowadays overlooked "starter punk" bands. When I was young, most kids got into punk via the Sex Pistols, the Clash, and other punk bands (mostly British) from the '77 explosion that had made it to major labels and chain stores, and then worked their way to the Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, and more underground bands from there. Talking to some younger punks at shows lately, I've found a lot of them got to hardcore from Green Day and NOFX or Nirvana and Soundgarden. Each generation has its own "gateway bands" but to my mind the first wave of starter punk is still the best. For me more than any band it was the Clash. I still rock the early singles and first two LPs on a regular basis. On the record player, on the computer, on the MP3 player, in the tape deck, I just never get sick of "White Riot" and "London's Burning." A lot of people these days seem to view the Clash with great hostility. I feel like this hostility should be saved for the Sex Pistols who really weren't that great and just had good clothes and publicity. The Clash on the other hand, wrote legitimately great songs, at least in the early part of their career. If you bother to dig deeper, there's a lot of pretty good songs scattered through their later career as well. Like the Ramones, this "punk rebel" band is now in regular rotation on the Classic Rock station and used in commercials and the like. All that aside, the early singles and first LP are stone cold classics, and the second LP is a highly under rated piece of work. I actually spin the second LP quite a lot. You get the feeling when listening to this LP that the record label didn't really quite get punk rock yet; they saw the Clash selling tons of records in the US (Clash self-titled was the best-selling import LP of all time) and tried to figure out how to record a Clash record that would sound "right" on American radio. *Give 'Em Enough Rope* sounds like '77 UK punk somehow filtered through the same production and mastering used by Cheap Trick or AC/DC. The end result is a pretty unique record, totally punk, but with a wild '70s hard rock vibe. I've written about the Clash before and so has every rock writer in the world. But I feel like I need to go on the record as a defender of starter punk and rehabilitate this band.



Depression's got a Hold of Me

Another night (or morning, rather) and here I am again looking up at the little line of cocaine sitting there on my desk waiting to be blown up my nose. It's 5 am. Why can't I just go to bed? Is there something wrong with me? You're alone. There's no music. No TV. Nothing. Just you and the little bit of drugs you've been hoarding for no apparent reason. You can't think of a single reason to get out of bed in the morning except to reset your router and maybe eat some dry cereal, which is only dry because you are too fucking lazy to take your ass to the fucking grocery store because HEB on a Sunday is worse than a Catholic wedding. Fuck, I think I'm depressed.

It's been a while since this has happened. Usually I can just fake my way through it and honestly I'm sure that eventually I'll be fine. Always am. But, fuck man. Not much is actually wrong with my life. Shit's actually going good for me right now, thus my anxiety. Just sitting around waiting for the other shoe to drop. My roommate is a goddamn parrot. Please be aware that this isn't some kinda weak analogy. My roomate is literally a fucking parrot. His name is Leo. He is a real sonofabitch. He wakes me up around 10am everyday making these sounds of absolute horror. So here I sit. I'm wasted, I have in one hand a .357 and in the other a bottle of Jameson. Do I A) kill the bird, B) just drink myself into a stupor so I don't notice his fucking squawks, or C) kill myself? Let's take a look at my options. If I kill Leo, my other roommate, Leo's owner (who the fuck owns a bird anway? Other than a magician, of course.) will more than likely freak out on me which is fair, because not only did I shoot a firearm in the house, but I also killed her fucking pet. Drinking myself to sleep is by far the best option however, these hangovers are getting the best of me and like I'm sure you agree, would further prolong my depression. And of course the latter, kill myself. Being a moderately attractive man, I acknowledge that I am far too vain for something like that. You don't spend this much money on dangly earrings and boots to just blow yourself to kingdom come. The way my luck goes I'll just fuck my face up à la Eric Stoltz in Mask and add even more scars to it. I'd lay on the ground for a while, someone would come home and find me, not dead just in agonizing pain and pissed. That would be fun. I need to figure out a plan D.

The new place that I moved into is the first one I have paid rent at in over two years. I know what you are thinking, and yes, I am so cool that people let me crash with them for months on end with nothing in return. That's the game, deal with it. Got a sick bed off craigslist and a desk from my boss, which oddly enough I am using right at this very second. Big boy shit. And you know what? I feel like a fucking asshole. People are protesting all over the world about this Wall Street crap (I have no idea what this is all about seeing as it hasn't been reported on the gossip websites, thus I have no concept of its relevancy, thus I couldn't give a single solitary shit.) yet all I can think about doing is going to work, coming home, eating some crap food, and sleeping for twelve hours, which of course will never happen again because like I have previously stated, my roommate is a fucking parrot. Note to self, start a blog called "my roommate is a parrot." To be fair, I did buy some sick suspenders today so things might be looking up.

The summer in Texas is oppressive, and although I'm writing this in October, please don't kid yourself, it's still in the '90s. Which, for all of our European readers, is pretty fucking hot. Makes it hard to get your day started. That coupled with that fact, that once I do get off my lazy ass there's a 50/50 chance that my truck will actually start and even if it does start there is a 100% chance that something will fuck up. Might be the window, might be the transmission. Who knows? Everyday is an adventure. In protest I choose to "occupy" my room. That's how I give the world the "business" by being a conscientious objector. I'll just stay out of the way and let everyone do what they want. I did attend a protest once. Hell, it was probably like ten years ago. I remember Bush was in office, actually… shit, that was what the protest was about. There was the chick I was super sprung on. She kinda had some weird political shit she was into, so being the little pimp that I am mentioned that there was gonna be a protest and that her attendance would be greatly appreciated, you know for the movement. I made a sign, It said "give Hinckley another shot." No one got my joke, she thought I was a freak, so I left. That was the first and last protest I ever attended.

If I had to pinpoint the exact moment this new bout of depression started I think it would have to be at my friends' wedding the other day. I'd known the couple for quite some time. It was to be like a weird sketchy family reunion of sorts. Tennessee was there, of course. Chase too. These were the real homies. Party dogs. Fighters, maniacs. You know the type. We all got dolled up and headed out to the country where the wedding was to go down. By 6 pm we were all wasted, hell, Charlie got cut off at the bar, an insult to his good character to which he called the wedding planner a "sour cunt." I for one thought that was quite impressive. Who the fuck gets cut off at a wedding? The service was lovely. My date was about as good looking as a woman needed to be. You know I looked great. Yet watching two incredible people delivering their vows got me a little sad. So I got shit hammered. During the speeches I was in the bathroom. Cutting of cake, bathroom. Tossing of the bouquet, bathroom. My nose was like a fucking Zamboni by 9 pm. Timmy rented a mansion out in the hills where we could all sleep at. It was a nice place. Didn't sleep too hot, but it was fun. I was hungover for two days and swore off the sauce forever. I failed, but hey, the best thing about failing is that you can always keep trying. Send bullshit to ldworrell@gmail.com

TRY HARDER

by Ariel Awesome

Talking to my mother is always an exercise in patience, but Skyping has added a new difficulty. I have to be careful not to roll my eyes at everything she says. She dresses up for our little face-to-face sessions. Even in a warzone my mother makes time to primp. Her bright coral lipstick is striking against the subdued tan of her fatigues. It occurs to me that I can't remember what she looked like just a couple years ago, before her facelift. The memory of her "natural" face is lost to me.

Before she went under the knife, she told me she was getting it done because she wanted to "age gracefully." We went out to lunch a week after, and she looked like a Halloween monster. Angry stitches circled her face. She wore a fur-lined jacket with her hood up and sunglasses on in the dark restaurant. She had caked on theater makeup so thick it was a sort of beige spackle; her skin was Barbie-like, plastic. Where the lipstick had worn away, her lips were a mottled plum purple.

"Yeah, real graceful. You look like a cross between the Invisible Man and the Bride of Frankenstein." She tried to frown at me, but it tugged painfully at her stitches.

Almost as if she knows what I'm thinking she decides to start up again on my appearance. "Honey, you are getting so grey. Why don't you dye it? You're making me feel old!" She shakes her butterscotch bob at the webcam. "You've got more grey than I do!"

Its true, I had stopped dying my hair. At first it was because I was feeling lazy and annoyed. The last batch of pink dye I used turned everything pink; combs, clothes, and pillowcases were to be expected, but I was annoyed when it rubbed off on couches, the tour van interior, and the clothes and faces of friends hugged. I felt like a highlighter with the cap off.

When I stopped my run through of the punk hair color wheel (pink, red, purple, black, green, blonde, pink, red...) I found a mass of grey building near my right temple. I was fascinated by it. The way it would peek through the inky waves of my hair, the way the white hairs curled wildly. They were thick, white, and wiry. I decided not to dye my hair anymore, to watch this streak grow for a while. I thought of my mother and felt a twinge of excitement. She would hate it.

We've been fighting about this since I was young girl. If I couldn't be naturally thin, pretty, and sugary sweet, she wanted me to try. She wanted me to go through the tweezing, waxing, starving, painting, bleaching, and silent prayers that would get me there. I would have rather eaten my own barf.

I couldn't articulate to my mother what I was feeling then. A rage was building in me, a desire to be in my body but not in my body. I hated my dark, rough knees, my swelling hips, my lack of grace. I hated how much I hated myself. I hated looking at women nothing like me and wondering why I was supposed to measure myself against them.

The first revelation about what I wanted to be, to feel, came with my discovery of punk. I dove into the music, aesthetic, and culture full force after my first show, embracing and recognizing cynicism and rage in it, like in me. But the first time punk spoke to me on a deep level, about how I felt about myself, about gender and the world, was when I watched some footage of Patti Smith playing in the '70s. She was comfortable and alive in her own skin, not performing her gender, not an object to be adored, but a voice, a presence, a phenomenon of her own. She was plain, unpainted, serious, and thoughtful. The opposite of everything I had ever had been told was desirable or pretty, but she was unbelievably beautiful to me. Watching her told me so much about what it was to be free of the burden I carried, the sad weight I didn't yet know the source of. Patti sparked the beginning of a very long process for me, one of getting comfortable in my own skin, of tearing apart the constructions of beauty so that I could be free of them.

We have not excised the culture of beauty from punk; those pressures still weigh on us. Contrasted with the way beauty standards have weighed on my mother, they seem trifling, but they are still there. When I think of my mother I am always reminded of the words of Naomi Klein: "Inside the majority of the West's controlled, attractive, successful working women, there is a secret 'underlife' poisoning our freedom; infused with the notion of beauty is a dark vein of self-hatred, physical obsession, terror of aging and dreaded lost control."

Her childhood was defined by a religious and moral code, an austerity and modesty. To her, feminism meant the freedom to embrace drinking, dancing, college, and living to please herself instead of her husband and the Lord. She embraced '60s beauty culture to rebel against religious ideas of modesty and propriety, but she put herself in another box. A box she tried to tell me was liberty. I don't blame her for that anymore, because at least now I see it.

I ask her what her mother, the small town Texan wife of a Baptist minister, would have thought of how she looks, she flashes me a thoughtful smile. "She'd say, 'Girl you are going straight to hell,' and maybe she's right," she says, " but I'm gonna look good when I get there."

She leans closer to the computer screen to get a better look at me, and in an atypically thoughtful moment she says, "Look how you want Ari, you always have, don't let me or anybody else tell you how to be. But for me, look good, whatever that means to you, go for it. You only live once, you only get to play for a short time, so embrace it."

Again, I note the brightness of her lipstick.

"You know mom, you would be really beautiful without all of that stuff."

She looks at me a little surprised. Then rolls her eyes, saying, "I'd just be an old lady."

"A beautiful old lady."

We sign off, and I sit contemplating myself in the computer screen's reflection now that it's gone dark. I'm telling her she would look so beautiful without all that crap on her, she has been saying a variation of the same thing to me for years. I curl the long streak of grey in front of my face, and smile.

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Where does all the shit you think is true come from? The media, your upbringing, the people closest to you now? Mine was all of those. It took years to tear down and reassemble ideas of beauty, truth, love: all the distortions that can make you feel empty or incomplete, make you doubt yourself and your abilities. But life continues to change and to evolve, you never get to a place you can rest and think the work is all done. It's a process. But all that work, all that tearing down the bullshit, fighting back against the tide of oppressive shit the world wants to dump on you, its worth it. It's worth being able look at yourself and instead of seeing everything you aren't, you see everything you are.

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CONSTRUCTIVE
CRITICISM
(SHIT TALKING)
WITH
JOHN
FAHY

What The Hell Is Going On?

While Americans have long whined about losing their premier power status internationally, now people are really beginning to understand this country is seriously in decline. The last presidential press conference I caught prompted Obama to talk about how China is subsidizing solar panel companies because the government anticipates that in the future, solar panels will be in high demand. We on the other hand, are not doing any such thing successfully. Meanwhile, a friend of mine who teaches told me that some local schools are beginning to teach second graders Mandarin in anticipation of the rise of China as an economic power, something that would send Republicans into a frenzy if they didn't have to admit it were true. Somewhere in the British press an article on the assassination of Osama bin Laden argued that the killing was the most obvious example of the decline of the American empire; shooting an unarmed ideological leader and dumping his body in the sea doesn't particularly scream democracy, justice, or any of the rest, it just seems like a way to gain short term political points.

Sure, this is a first world country with plenty of wealth, but opportunity for common people vanishes faster every year. The wealth the nation has doesn't circulate the same way it once did and now this is what people are protesting on Wall Street. Fucked as we may feel now, more-fucked is what the future looks to hold. The protests are long overdue but if anything, it's surprising to me that people in this country have the urge to fight against anything besides perceived "socialism" or the threat of health insurance spreading virus-like.

The current story is that Europe is going through some heady economic shit and that Greece will invariably default, the outcome of which no one really knows — whether Greece will leave the Euro, for example — but whatever way the chips fall, it won't be good. This will affect most of the world economy negatively, with maybe the exception of China and other rising economies like India. This is just the delayed domino effect of all the sickening mortgage roulette games that Wall Street had banks across the world playing, the ultimate result of all of the efforts toward globalization. So we absorb these stories in the media and brace for things to get worse. The simple fact that the protests on Wall Street remind us of is that if we stopped comforting and protecting the wealthiest who've sabotaged our economies, we'd all have more money and more work. More importantly, they remind us that we don't have to keep standing by watching each other get robbed.

Protests are spreading to other cities now and these ideas seem to be catching on. The criticisms the media have leveled at the protest are exactly what's good about it; that there is no spokesperson or leader figure for the media to tear at, just a mass of pissed off people. Whether it will be enough to make anything change is another matter. In the meantime, what we can do is support the people that are protesting. There's plenty of people to protest when unemployment is at ten percent, but there's always room for more and it's very possible that your job is next to get chopped anyway. For those of us that still have work, we have to find more ways to get ahead – scams included – and share them with one another before things get any worse.

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The ENDLESS GRINNING SKULLS LP has some lyrics that at times like these are quite fitting, "we've all been means tested, we are just old meat/the scavengers win again and again." This record is kind of hard to talk about because it's quite simply, solid hardcore punk. It charges forward and bullies the listener into feeling the bleak mood that permeates the album. It's heavy, it's fast, there's deeply burly vocals happening, the riffs are fucking good. There are some very catchy tunes on here, like the title track and "Circle of Scavengers," which the above lyrics are from. The cover folds out into a 24" by 36" poster a la CRASS and looks pretty damn good. Viral Age records in the UK has these, check it out.

The CLOUD RAT / OILY MENACE / WOLBACHIA split LP is a grinding monster if there ever was one; all three bands are playing at insane levels of intensity. OILY MENACE is possibly the heaviest recording on the slab, featuring inhuman vocals and very precise, blinding, abrupt riffs. WOLBACHIA have a guitar sound that amidst all the chaos stands out as especially dirty, which I love. Some of the riffs this band plays sound like the alarms that would go off at a plant during a nuclear meltdown. CLOUD RAT never ceases to amaze, one release after another. That they sound as heavy live as they do on vinyl is truly some incredible shit for a simple drums/vocals/guitar setup. Everything I'm hearing from this band has been awesome and I know they have some more splits and releases coming up so keep an eye out. The LP comes housed in a screenprinted recycled jacket featuring a terrifying Rasputin photo and comes with a booklet and even kale seeds. No shit. Get at Nevin at www.ifbrecords.com for these.

Bock Rock Parade is a stellar record, top to bottom. Completely fucking carried away with, the songs here are unhinged and make me feel like I'm getting pushed down a spiral staircase blindfolded. I liked the two EPs RATIONAL ANIMALS released in the last few years, but this record elevates them considerably. All of Will's guitar leads are appropriately out of control and Zach's vocals are killer. I'm a big time sucker for the last, most somber track, "If Only You Could Hear Me Now," particularly when the reverbed-out guitar punches in towards the end. I hope this band does some more touring because they're writing damn fine songs and put on a good show. Get these if you haven't already from Katorga Works.

SHOPPERS LP *Silver Year* is a fantastic record, it befuddles upon first listen in all of its noisy glory. The bass is out of control, drums are stomping out a pattern that commands attention, while the guitar is off on it's own tantrum and yet everything ends up making perfect sense. I was describing to someone the overall background hum of this record as sounding like a jet crash on a very rainy night. Meredith's vocals help to command enough to synch everything to her voice and yet that still doesn't stop the record from feeling like it could fall apart momentarily. Each side of this LP does close with a track that step back a bit and throw out some pretty beautiful harmonies, changing things up from the mayhem. I love this shit. Check out copies from Feeble Minds and Drugged Conscience records.

Shock To The System records has released an excellent split with GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE and LIBYANS. It's pretty impressive what these two bands get done on this record; three short catchy songs each on 45 rpm. GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE has an excellent clean guitar sound and male/female vocals that intertwine over frantic, lo-fi catchiness. LIBYANS gets better with every release, and this is possibly my favorite so far. Liz writes some vocal hooks that keep these songs locked in brain cells long past listen one. The second track on their side, "Misquote Me," is the gem of the side; an infectious mid-paced number with a verse that murders.

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For those interested in pressing vinyl, friends have recently pointed me in the direction of Palomino Press out of Kentucky. If you're looking for another plant besides United, Rainbow, etc. and are particularly interested in a smaller run, Palomino is well worth checking out. It seems like they prefer to do five hundred copies or less and their pricing is the lowest I've seen of the American plants. Five hundred seven inches run $675.00 and three hundred LPs run $950.00. Word has spread pretty quickly about them already, so they've become backed up for the rest of the year apparently. Still, check them out at www.dosado.com for more pricing. You can also check out a video of how they press records there.

Until next time, all correspondence to: John Fahy, 15011 lakeside Dr. Apt. 2402, Fort Myers, FL 33919 or fahy_john@hotmail.com

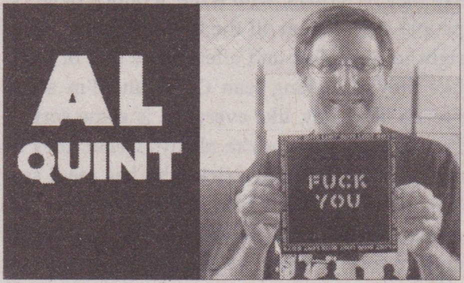
BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

Is it any wonder I did all those drugs? Why I spent all those hours, days, weeks in my room, high, up with the sun, my face crazy with a xylophone smile, winking madly at nothing and saying "Well, World, if it's all the same to you, I think I'll just sit this one out." Is this a surprise, a revelation? No, I'm not sure why I'm like this. I'm completely unsure of what drove me to be the way I am, which is truly unhappy if I'm to be honest, and though I can't recall most of my life, maybe I've been this way the whole time—that this is all I know and I should be content, because, anyways, things aren't going to get better, and if they get worse, well, hell, I'll turn Krishna and give myself to God, maybe, if He'll have Me. The past year has flashed by like nothing, like lightning over my shoulder, and here I am, older (really!), with zip, nothing, absolutely zero to show for it, maybe a cough, I don't know if it's permanent, but it's been in me for a while. I just fart around my room and sometimes the streets, bars and all that, but mostly my room and spend a lot of time in bed or just walking between my closet and my chair, folding things and hanging them up, don't get me wrong, the place is still a mess, but that's what I do, so there. Maybe I'm biding my time, waiting it out, I don't know. I'm waiting, no clue for what, maybe success, or some crazy angel of opportunity to come crashing through my window and shooting me off to be bright and industrious somewhere pleasant and quiet.

One of the worst, the most eye-roll obnoxious things you can say to people, is to say that you write. It's like it should in italics, *"Hey, I write."* or *"I'm a writer."* That's how disgusting it is, how low, it's like a curse or an insult, no, more like a slur, I never say it. I don't ever say it because I'm not ever doing it, writing, that is, mostly I'm just half-naked on some floor, my floor, who knows, telling lies to anyone who will listen, out the window, maybe on the phone. Who knows, it could be that's what writing is. I don't know. I don't write, it makes me sick, I get tense and strange and suddenly fatigued, I have to sit for hours and do absolutely nothing, or as close as I can get, if I even think about writing, I hate it. Sometimes even reading makes me sick. I don't know…I can't stand it. The people I've met, who say they're writers, who write, a bunch of jerks, people who button all the buttons on the shirt, right to the collar, and affect some sort of look, like they're fucking Jean Genet and I'm some French baby boy, like everyone is some sort of French baby, and they're always Genet, they're not, they're just some prick who has read, say, Bukowski or some other crumb like that and thinks that just because you wear an undershirt and smoke cigarettes like they're the most heavy thing on the planet you're some sort of genius. Bullshit, I think, bullshit, bullshit.

Hell, to tell the truth, to be honest, I can barely stand anyone else who reads. I say barely, because sometimes I can, but afterwards they always leave me sick—like I've eaten Salways going on about this and that. Always some limp guy in expensive glasses talking about some crap he's read, that I've never heard of, maybe it doesn't exist, who knows. But they're talking about it—talking my ear off, I hate them. Or some girl, maybe she's read some terribly important philosophy book, that's what women like, philosophy, it's ruined them, I can hardly speak to a girl who's been to college or even high school, they're sick. Who knows, this might be the reason I don't hang around anyone, or at most very stupid people, or at least unread, which I suppose is the same thing, but not all bad if you think about it. Being very stupid has it's perks, quite a few of them, more than being smart, that's for sure, unless you're the sort of stupid-smart that everyone who I meet that is lauded about town as "smart" seems to turn out. You know, when they claim to have all this knowledge and depth and all that, but that's all it is, a claim, no knowledge, no depth. Sure, they know some names, some nouns, all that, but it's nothing, having a glimpse of depth (no italics this time) is different, very different, than possessing real depth—not that I claim to have it, but I've sunk, sunk very, very low. And I know something about being low, and depth, well, the word, the sound of the word, it says something about being low, and you know they never really are.

But I'm not really so much of a sad sack. It's true that I laze about my apartment, fanning myself with picture sleeves, like some insane pauper pharaoh, but I've little else to do and it's too obnoxious to be outside half the time. As you can read, I didn't think much about writing a column, I thought it was done, I thought my time here was up, maybe it's not, I don't know, but I figured instead of sending in nothing this month, might as well complain a bit, nothing to do with punk, but everything just the same, hah, maybe I'm nuts, maybe I'm not, but I have at least next months column. Maybe the month after, we'll see, you and I, what truly revelatory and insightful things I come up with in the next piece I write. Everyone in the world is an asshole—me too.



Are You Ready For Some Stupidity?

I've never liked Hank Williams, Jr. When you're the son of one of the true legends in music history, never mind country music, it's probably unfair to make comparisons. I mean, does anyone remember Julian Lennon, who had a few hits in the '80s? I'll admit I've only heard some songs here and there and I have a friend who insists he's a brilliant musician. I tend to doubt it, even though this guy is from West Virginia and might be a bit more knowledgeable about country music than I am. The main reason I don't like Hank Jr. is because he has rather regressive political views. I imagine that's par for the course in the world of country music. Whenever I've seen him speak (rarely, thankfully), he's come across as a clueless buffoon. Let's put it this way, he makes Ted Nugent sound like a Mensa candidate. On second thought, forget I said that. It's probably a draw with those two.

Anyway, I'm sure anyone who watches *Monday Night Football* has, unfortunately, been subjected to Hank Jr.'s wretched song "Are You Ready For Some Football." That composition was retooled from a song called "All My Rowdy Friends Are Coming Over Tonight." I *really* don't need to hear the original to make a comparison. Thank god for the mute button on my remote when I happen to tune in at the start of the game. I'm not all that enamored with Mike Tirico (who has some sexual harassment accusations in his past), Ron Jaworski, or Jon Gruden, either, the Three Stooges in the booth during the games. Gruden has a habit of constantly referring to players as "this guy" or "that guy." If there was a drinking game where you drank a shot every time he said one of those phrases, you'd be unconscious halfway through the first quarter. I haven't even mentioned how some of his commentary about certain players borders on homoerotic. Not that there's anything wrong with that, of course. One of the local sports stations plays audio of Gruden the day after the game and it's hilarious. They even have a contest where the caller guesses if Gruden said "this guy" or "that guy" in reference to a certain player. All of this gets me pining for the days of Frank Gifford, Dandy Don Meredith, and Howard Cosell—yes, "Humble Howard." He was a self-absorbed, egotistical blowhard but he was also one of the few mainstream (perhaps only?) pundits to stand by Muhammad Ali when Ali was stripped of his title and denied his livelihood after refusing to join the military to fight in Vietnam. I know it was 40 years ago and that most of you haven't heard of these guys except perhaps Ali. I'd even settle for John Madden coming out of retirement.

Getting back to 'ol Hank Jr., though—it looks as though we've heard "Are You Ready For Some Football" for the last time. Hank appeared on the idiotic Fox News show "Fox and Friends" and opined that President Obama and John Boehner playing golf together was akin to Hitler playing golf with Israeli president Benjamin Netanyahu. Even Brian Kilmeade, one of the three dumbass hosts, said he didn't understand that analogy. That happened on a Monday and ESPN pulled Hank Jr.'s song from that night's broadcast and, a few days later, parted company with him altogether. Hank claimed it was his decision and that ESPN was trampling on his free speech rights. Gotta save face, I suppose.

That's even worse than when he appeared at some rallies in support of McCain and Palin in 2008. He turned his song "Family Tradition" into "McCain/Palin Tradition" and offered the tired meme of the "liberal media," accused Obama of associating with terrorists, and said that Palin was "such a 'hey-good-lookin' dish." How dare he denigrate one of his father's most famous songs? It's an outrage, I tell 'ya! He also had a line about how Palin is "like a mama bear in Idaho" and that "she'll protect your family's condition." Considering Palin's continuing vendetta against "Obamacare," I wonder how she was going to protect my own family's condition, since she doesn't believe in any sort of public option.

Speaking of traditions, I've had my own tradition when recording my show on the first Monday of the football season. The Minneapolis punk band the MAGNOLIAS had a song on their 1989 album *Dime Store Dream* called "Fathers and Sin," which is not all that complimentary towards Hank Jr. Here are some of the lyrics: "Die Hank Jr., Jr. die / Die Hank Jr., Jr. die / You're making your father roll over in his grave." That's the gist of it. I mean, there ain't much to the lyric but this song is a *lot* better than the Hank Jr. one. On the show, I'd play a snippet of Hank's song, stop it with a gunshot sound effect and go into the MAGNOLIAS song. That tradition might be coming to an end. *This guy* is more than willing to sacrifice that tradition for finally being rid of that blasted song. Don't cry for Hank, though. I'm sure it's just a matter of time until Fox gives him his own show to play a few songs and enlighten us all with his cogent political analysis. Maybe he can do a duet with Sarah Palin, now that she's not running for president...

Are You Ready For Some Punk Rock?

It's not intentional, but the first four records reviewed here are by bands from Portland, OR. *Reveries* is the first full-length by ARCTIC FLOWERS. I've been waiting for this one since seeing them last year and giving their previous 7" plenty of play. When I reviewed that EP (and there was also a split 7" with SPECTRES), I said that I think they have a great album in them, and *Reveries* lives up to those expectations. Encompassing early '80s post-punk, goth, hardcore in a seamless fusion. Those are just elements; they've got their own sound. Glowing, haunting guitar parts reinforced with in-the-pocket bass and drums and powerful vocals that are not yelled but sung with soaring authority. Tracks like "Crusaders + Banshees" really bring out the band's strengths, with a guitar line that sticks and a chorus that packs a primal wallop. Even when they delve into moodier regions, there's no softening in the approach. Nor does the melody disappear when they pick up the pace, although I prefer it when they play at a measured tempo. The lyrics tend towards the oblique although that's not always the case; "Vexed" cogently describes dealing with life's day-to-day struggles. The definition of reveries is to be lost in ones thoughts or daydreaming, but the songs sure as hell won't allow you to drift off into blissfulness. On the contrary, they command your full attention. (Inimical, PO Box 2803, Portland, OR 98111, www.inimical.com)

Also on Inimical is the latest 7" by RAW NERVES, *Burnt Skin*. Three news songs following their POISON IDEA-meets-crust blueprint, at least on the two fast-paced songs on the A-side. The B-side, "S = K LOG W," is a slow, brooding pounder on a BORN AGAINST-ish tip with an anti-religion theme. I get the feeling this song works better live; it's a little tedious here. The other songs are good, though.

Sticking with the hardcore, ORGANIZED SPORTS's 12", *I'm So Proud Of Him* is chock full of boiling-over rage. I've been saying I'm burnt out on this sound lately. The exception is when a band has a certain head-grabbing relentlessness, which is the case here. Drawing from a SYSTEMATIC DEATH muse this also had me thinking of CAUSTIC CHRIST, with the rough, howling vocals and straight-on fury. They do stretch things out and slow the pace during the mid-section of "Sweet Chin Motion," but it doesn't dilute the furiousness all that much. Every instrument has a pulverizing effect and, to paraphrase one of the lyrical lines, they *do* sound "cheesed-off." The lyrics feature first-person expressions of life's frustrations. It's nothing new, of course, but life's been sucking lately so it's easy to feed off this sort of anger. It has me banging my head, stomping my foot, and shaking my fist. Consider that an endorsement. (Bulkhead: www.bulkheadrecords.com)

The last of the Portland bands in this column is RIPPER, with their *Into Oblivion* LP. They play MOTÖRHEAD-ish hard rock 'n metal, taking a tour through NWOBHM land, as well (New Wave of British Heavy Metal, for you non-headbangers). "Born To Lose" might even be a blatant tip of the cap or pumping of the spiked wristband to Sir Lemmy (has he been knighted yet?). Raspy vocals, lead guitar and lead bass tradeoffs, versatile drumming with an abundance of cymbal riding as the rock rumbles along at a steady clip. It's a thick sound but sprightly enough and—dare I say it—catchy in spots ("Soldier of Fortune" and "Razor's Edge" for instance). To quote "Soldier of Fortune," let the battlehorns blow. Or let the guitars roar. They do a pretty good job of that, here. (Blackwater, PO Box 5223, Portland, OR 97208, www.blackwaterpdx.com)

San Francisco trio RANK/XEROX has released a brilliant debut album. You could call it post-punk or art-punk and you wouldn't be off the mark. Jarring guitar gnash underpinned by menacing bass and drums that provide a solid foundation. Some obvious touch points are the FALL and early WIRE but, to my ears, they remind me of the early '80s Boston band NATIVE TONGUE, another trio who had angular guitar lines offset by nimble rhythms. The final song, "Turn To Stone," has a synth melody that you won't be able to get out of your head. Same for "Helpless," only the bass provides the hook on that song. "Padek Man" begins with the lumbering clank of the A-FRAMES before concluding with a frayed climax. "You Might Follow" is darker, with distorted drums and a brooding arrangement. Themes of alienation and isolation permeate the lyrics, which shouldn't really come as any sort of surprise. There's an anti-social sentiment on the aforementioned "Turn To Stone," with the music's cold ambiance complemented perfectly with the opening statement "I got a massive problem, I'm falling apart and people want me to be a part of some kind of race/But I don't feel like you and I don't look like you." In this era of disillusionment, this album makes for an appropriate and inviting soundtrack. (Make A Mess, www.makeamessrecords.com)

EXECUTIONER was also from the Bay Area—San Jose, on the South Bay, to be exact. They were around from '82 to '83 and, until last year, the only material that had ever been released was on a cassette comp. That changed when Patac put out a four-song EP and they've now followed that with a 29-track CD anthology. The material on this CD is culled from demo sessions, plus a few live tracks and two songs that were actually recorded in 2008 (and don't sound out of place), though it's not in strict chronological order. The sound quality varies, with the 1983 recordings sounding sonically superior. They've also shown musical advancement since the '82 sessions. In fact, the other recordings sound rather rough, especially the six songs that were released on the *Growing Pains* cassette compilation. Tuneful 'n' snotty West Coast hardcore, metallic guitar touches, and razorwire vocals conjuring up Blaine Cook from the ACCUSED/FARTZ. It's a pity this didn't see the light of day until after a quarter century, although I probably would have done a vinyl pressing with the '83 session and the two 2008 recordings, in a proper sequence. Still, there's some scrappy punk to be found here. Packaged in a 7" sleeve with a foldout poster that has a collage by Winston Smith. (Patac, www.patacrecords.com)

MAJOR DAMAGE's self-titled 7" EP is a solo project from Brandon Ferrell, who you might know from such fine combos as DIRECT CONTROL and GOVERNMENT WARNING, as well as No Way records and the Vinyl Conflict store. He played all the instruments and did the vocals for the seven songs here, although he also put together a band for shows. MAJOR DAMAGE features short blasts of old school hardcore with varying tempos, rougher and meaner-sounding than his other bands and he sings in a lower, tougher cadence. It sounds like a collision of NYC and Boston hardcore bands, at times. For instance, "Demise" is part ANTIDOTE, part DYS. Straight outta '83. (Even Worse: www.evenworserecords.com / Way Back When: www.waybackwhenrecords.com)

Finally, there's a split 7" with GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE and LIBYANS, two bands on opposite coasts. Each unit's songs are presented with rough-hewn production. GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE has been around awhile, but I'm pretty sure this is the first material I've heard by them. Jabbing, almost garage-y punk with a certain amount of charm. Adrian's over the top vocals on "Anyone Can Do It" are ear rattling but really win me over. The three new songs by LIBYANS aren't quite as memorable as the tracks on their previous records. They do bring a feisty energy to the songs; "Misquote Me" is the catchiest of the three tracks. It's not really a competition but I've been playing the GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE songs more. (PO Box 400296, Cambridge, MA 02140, www.shocktothesystemrecs.com)

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net, www.sonicoverload.net, subvox.blogspot.com

BASEMENT SCREAMS

Days are getting shorter, it's fall in New England. What's new here? Nothing much really. Real quick, a new bit of home-recorded rage:

BLOODKROW BUTCHER has been the local favorite for the young shoelace-head punks in Boston for a while now, and after a couple of tapes and a lathe-cut flexi, they've finally made available a hard vinyl 7" of D-beating perfection on the Total Fucker label. Whereas their early offerings were in the Disclose noise for noise's sake mold, over the past year they've steadily shed this rather unnecessary aspect of their sound for a more traditional, straight-forward Scandinavian/Finnish style attack harkening back to the classic '80s runs of RATTUS, TERVEET KÄDET, and of course TOTALITÄR. It comes off incredibly naturally, and to be honest I can't think of the last time I've caught a USHC band able to do this style so well. With their new self-titled 7" finally in my hands I was pretty anxious to see how their evolution would translate to wax, and I was relieved to hear they nailed it. I found out from someone or other it was recorded on an always-classic Tascam 388, the much beloved 1/2" reel-to-reel 8-track Tascam sold in the late '70s/early '80 s. Proof again that "home recording" and "8-track" don't have to mean a lack of clarity unless you want them to, this thing shreds in the most classic '80s way, featuring crisp drums with the right amount of attack and roominess, raging and heavy guitars, prominent bass, and good, hoarse HC vocals. There's really nothing to complain about on this one; it's a flawless victory if you ask me. Well-executed basement screamage.

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I got an email a couple months back asking about a recent album that noted: "absolutely no drum replacement, triggering, quantizing, or amp modeling were used on this recording," and asking what all that meant. I want to emphasize, I'm a layman… wait… layperson… and this column exists to put the somewhat bizarre and confusing recording process into terms for the layperson. With that in mind I'll try and break down this statement.

A lot of records that get made these days are highly reliant on all kinds of digital recording tricks and doodads to be made reality. As I've noted before, I think there are huge benefits to recording digitally, and I feel like some folks frown upon recording on a computer unfairly. That said, there are a lot of techniques that pro-engineering people use almost as a standard now that are, in my view, and most likely the view of most people reading here, unsavory.

I'm sure I'm not alone in saying that a good drum sound goes a long way. I'm sure at least a few people are aware that making drums sound good is not an exact science, no matter how much you try to make it one. It has become increasingly easy over the past ten years to use samples of drum hits that sound quite close to the real thing, and there are entire sects of the recording industry devoted to the perfection of this practice. Obviously, and rightfully so, a lot of folks feel like there's something inherently counterfeit about doing this, and it's not terribly common in the hardcore and punk worlds, although in some of the more, ahem, glossy… realms of the style it is not uncommon to find bands using sound-replacement software, or sampled drum hits.

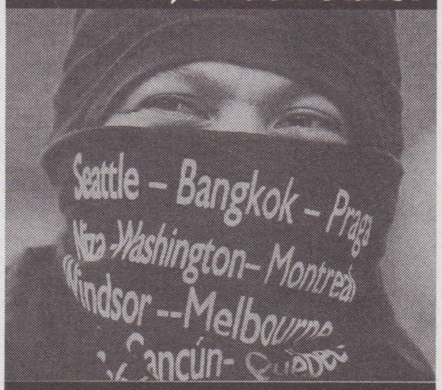
In an incredibly simplified explanation, sound replacement software basically takes the drum track, usually marries it to a grid (which is often a product of a quantizing), and then replaces the individual drum hits with pre-recorded samples. The quantization essentially makes the tempo uniform, which allows the engineer the ability to then change portions of the song structure if they want. In hardcore this is kind of pointless, most bands don't go into the studio without songs that are finished, but if you're METALLICA and you spend a year farting into your amps in hopes that something like a riff will eventually come out, this can be kind of helpful. You can theoretically build something, from nothing, though I can almost guarantee you it will suck. Aside from the feeling that these kinds of methods are somehow "cheating," there's a certain soullessness to a completely steady, even, uniform drum track, and it's only enhanced by the sound of a sampled drum kit. I've certainly made use of the ability to replace "bad" drum hits with "good" ones during mixing, but with maybe two exceptions, I have used this pretty sparingly over the years of recording digitally, and only as a last resort.

Triggering was kind of the precursor to drum replacing, wherein a small sensor was attached to each drum that played a sampled sound in real time each time the drummer hit the drum. Sometimes there was a pad put in place of the drum altogether. This stuff was kind of common in the '80s, and if you listen to some '80s hardcore like for instance the early stuff by DOOM, you can hear a very cheap Simmons brand snare pad, which sounds a little too clean and robotic. Triggering was pretty common in heavy metal in the '80s and it became the norm in a lot of studios at that time. At this point, most people are liable to just use sound replacing software, which analyzes a drum track after it has been played, and indeed plenty of metal bands use this technique now to create perfectly even and flawless drumming for their records. You'll find it pretty common with music that relies a lot on blast beats, and other similarly hectic drum styles.

Lastly, amp modeling is sort of… the guitarist's answer to sampled drums. Essentially, this is software that claims to be able to copy the sound of any number of expensive guitar and bass amps. All you have to do is plug in direct, and choose your settings on screen. To me, modeled guitar sounds are never quite right, but some people see the benefit as being that you can record your guitar playing first, and then worry about shaping the actual guitar sound later. If it really worked as well as it's supposed to, more people would use it, but I don't think we're at the point yet where a computer program can really fool you in simulating an amp sound.

Hopefully this helps explain this stuff on a basic level. What the initial statement ("absolutely no drum replacement, triggering, quantizing, or amp modeling were used on this recording") is essentially meant to say is that there is no sonic trickery being used. What you hear on this album are the real sounds this band made in the studio.

Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan - What's Left?

A couple of columns ago, I criticized the "Occupy Everything, Demand Nothing" movement as strategically and tactically simplistic, glorifying risk-taking, and proudly anti-intellectual. Now we have the Occupy Wall Street movement that has grown from a few hundred participants to thousands at NYC's Zuccotti Park (renamed Liberty Square), spread to scores of cities across the country, and staged its first wildly successful worldwide action on October 15. No doubt, in lopping off the nihilistic "demand nothing" aspect of the overtly insurrectionary anarchist/communist movement, Occupy Wall Street increased its popular appeal enormously. Yet, in doing so, it has turned its focus to mush.

Aside from Glenn Beck, who sees worldwide Marxist revolution around every corner, commentators in the vast media punditocracy—whether conservative, moderate or liberal—have complained of Occupy Wall Street's vagueness. What do they want? What are they demanding? Even the movement's fans and critics on the Left are asking the same thing, just as they unsuccessfully attempt to push Occupy Wall Street in a more explicitly anti-capitalist direction. And without an unambiguous and unequivocal set of demands Occupy Wall Street, at least the original American version, has the appearance of a giant rave, complete with face painting, casual nudity and bad music. Jon Stewart has given it the tongue-in-cheek label of "the hard rock café of leftist movements."

Initiated by the anti-consumerist, pro-situ website/magazine *Adbusters*, Occupy Wall Street has championed an anti-corporate sentiment. As one sign prominently displayed on the internet proclaims: "Capitalism is not the problem, corporate greed and corruption are." And while tepid concerns for wealth inequality are expressed, no calls for true wealth redistribution in the form of socialism, let alone communism, are put forward. If one digs down into the movement's official website* (occupywallst.org), proposed demands can be found, but they amount to petitions for government legislative action to reregulate the financial sector, break up corporate monopolies, and criminalize various economic misdeeds. What this boils down to then is a revitalized New Deal (Franklin D. Roosevelt) and Antitrust movement (Theodore Roosevelt) which will make capitalism more small scale, competitive, responsible, and ethical.

Nothing more, nor less, than what DIY amounted to in punk rock.

I'm disappointed, particularly when I note how radical the solidarity demos around the world were. Damn, there was a near uprising in Rome on October 15. It's not too difficult to demonstrate how the Occupy Wall Street experience could take a step or two to the left, yet remain ostensibly unchanged. For that, let's go to Occupy Oakland on Thursday evening, October 13. My reading group decided to relocate to the occupation, where we took in some of the general assembly, and in particular a little bit of the entertainment before the endless subcommittee reports and issue votes, and before we discussed Fredric Jameson's brilliant essay "Utopia as Replication." Boots Riley (of The Coup and Street Sweeper Social Club fame) performed a couple of songs, accompanied by Gabby La La on the sitar, and while he encouraged the folks present to make their movement something that the powers-that-be *had* to negotiate with, instead of *choose* to, his stirring performance of "Ghetto Blaster" and "5 Million Ways to Kill a CEO" made his anti-capitalist sentiments clear.

In an earlier, political incarnation, Boots was a member of Oakland's Young Comrades. One of their actions protesting Oakland police harassment of local black youth under the city's infamous "no cruising" ordinance nearly fifteen years ago had a unique flare. The Young Comrades organized a barbeque picnic at Lake Merritt Park on a warm sunny weekend day, and set up a portable indy radio station to broadcast music and messages throughout the park. They also invited every Oakland teenager to attend. I happened to be doing my exercise walk around Lake Merritt at the time, and what I experienced blew me away. Grand Avenue from Broadway east was packed with kids, boys and girls, most of them black, standing on the sidewalks, and having a great time. It was an incredible party environment, with everybody having fun, hanging out next to their cars, playing their music loud, flirting, and perhaps doing a variety of drugs all very well camouflaged. I was having the time of my life walking around, taking in the absolutely non-hostile, celebratory atmosphere. But talk about Fear of a Black Planet! The cops were completely flummoxed, unable to cope with the crowds, incapable of making arrests or dispersing the throngs, totally stymied by this brilliant, essentially nonviolent action. The Oakland PD, used to harassing the shit of black youth, were checkmated, and obviously frustrated.

This was an occupy Oakland before the current Occupy Oakland, but unlike the latter, nearly all white affair**, this earlier occupation was exaltedly multiracial, from organizers to participants, a true reflection of the city's character. Neither occupation had explicit demands. But the one organized by the Young Comrades accomplished its implicit demand—ending police harassment of black kids—at least for the duration of the action. With other community organizations, the Young Comrades succeeded in overturning Oakland's "no cruising" ordinance. Finally, the tactical audacity of the Young Comrades event, occurring as it did a decade and a half ago, is memorable, whereas walking around the current Occupy Oakland made it clear that this was one more eminently forgettable hippie-dippie rainbow-type gathering.***

To be fair, the Young Comrades were a cadre organization, whereas Occupy Wall Street is a headless mass organization, a leftist example of leaderless resistance. Ideally, you'd have both simultaneously, as in the Spanish 1936-39 Revolution with the cadre FAI standing beside the mass CNT, both revolutionary anarchist organizations. But if I had to make a choice, give me the Young Comrades over Occupy Wall Street every time.

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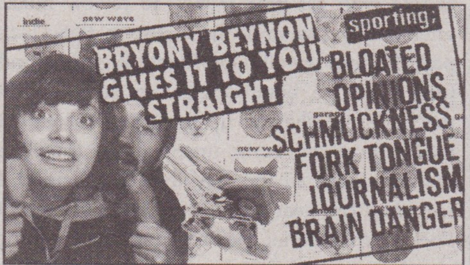
*Occupy Wall Street put up an original demand page for participant voting that was later taken down. All subsequent efforts to put forward demands for OWS, even to initiate working groups to formulate demands, has been met with denials, and the rather sad catchphrase "we are our demands." Talk about mush! Check admin comments for: http://occupywallst.org/forum/proposed-list-of-demands-please-help-editadd-so-th/ and http://occupywallst.org/forum/proposed-list-of-demands-for-occupy-wall-st-moveme/

**After the horrific internal violence at Occupy Oakland, many of the white liberals, unemployed workers, and even some of the white anarcho types fled, leaving the encampment to the homeless, the black poor, and a strata of angry black youth. Not the all white affair it started as, but not the joyous occupation produced by the Young Comrades either.

***On the other hand, the brutal police dismantling of Occupy Oakland, and the extremely violent police attack on demonstrators afterwards will live on in infamy.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.



I have very little interest in talking "about" records as objects, rather than as a collection of songs or a document of a band. I can definitely get down with 1001 nights spent yakking about the various merits of different stages of any given back catalogue, but you can roundly fuck off if you think I care to know what pressing of what you have, or how much you paid for it, snoozevilles. Procurement stories are cool and interesting, receipts and dick measuring are not. Yeah, pokemon punks and their "gotta catch 'em all" disposable income derby do very little for me; in fact it makes me feel a bit nauseous if I am honest. I'm not up for scoring points about who had the most dough to give to eBay that month, to cleave a chunk of someone else's story off and hold it in a dustcase forever. Ugh. The magic of finding and buying records in unexpected places, sure, that's a thing I love, and the simple pleasure of exploring parts of a city you never otherwise would by mapping out its secret spots, definitely. I've just always found the weird competitiveness that seems to rear its head in that game rather a poor substitute for people who are just super stoked on actual music on the records, which should surely be available to all interested parties regardless of income status. With the continued prominence of filesharing as a neat way to try and achieve that goal, not to mention the upsurge in cool tape cassette demos, it occurred to me last week that I had been neglecting my actual physical collection of records somewhat. In the interests of remedying this, I've been having a dig about. Here are five LPs (well, the Minutemen record is technically an EP) I listened to this afternoon:

ULTIMO RESORTE – Post Mortem (Radikal) – This was first up, because I got given this last week in the cinema, an eight month late birthday present, but by no means unwelcome. Thanks Ralph. We had gone for an afternoon movie (one of the mobile phone networks here run an offer that means you get half price movies on a Wednesday, meaning that I haven't been to the cinema on any other day for at least five years) and the place was somehow deserted. I opened the mailer in almost total darkness and had to decipher what LP it was. Exposed nipple, red fishnet, slightly pixelated art... ah-hah. I had been told this was "their goth record" but this is way more bouncy than it is funereal. The glossy insert is almost entirely in Spanish, which is slowly becoming less of a problem as I rekindle the reasonable ability I once had at school, not least through my new band with a lady from Madrid of all places, where I have to sing back up in Spanish. I digress! Spooky is an overused adjective in these times, and this hits a way more Neo-Boys or even Kleenex style spot than any kind of melodramatic lace trimmed vibe, but still with all the frugal darkness of both the aforementioned bands.

THE MINUTEMEN – Project: Mersh (SST) – Layla gave me this record the last time I was in San Francisco, and it's pitiful that I'm only just now getting around to hearing it. With its sonic departure founded on a ruse to pillory bands out purely for commercial ("mersh") success, and presumably play havoc with the climate of the time where SST were pissing out half-arsed records, it strikes me that only a band of this calibre could attempt such a bizarre feat, detouring at Steppenwolf covers, bringing in vocal harmonies, pushing the limit to nearly six minutes on "More Schpiel," with not a small amount of Doors-esque fripperies, and yet still make such an interesting and let's face it sort of awesome record.

COMBATWOUNDEDVETEREN – I Know a Girl who Develops Crimescene Photos (No Idea) – The records in this room have not been strictly alphabetised for a long time. There are, loosely, three sections: "go to records," "new purchases," and then a heap of records that is basically anything I bought pre-2004, that tend to get ignored, but for some reason cannot be parted with. My propensity for nostalgic retention is at its wild worst when it comes to these records. I could have sold some stuff, but absolutely missed the boat on selling anything of worth that could be called "screamo" (a tag, incidentally, that got slapped onto anything vaguely chaotic sounding during the trend's latter years, and caused for a lot of good shit to get overlooked.) This could well be the case to some degree for Combatwoundedveteran, whose Floridian destruction of various kinds is arguably at its peak on this LP, which I'm shocked to see came out way back in 1999. It totally destroyed me when I first listened to it, and every subsequent obsessive spin. I couldn't tell you when it fell out of regular favour, probably around the time that bands like bloody Righteous Jams started to seem like a serious prospect on this island. Ouch. I thought the CWV artwork was cool as shit and tuneless oblivion of the songs blew my mind although I had no frame of reference for it. Returning to it now, there's a kind of knowingness to some of it, that irks me a little in the same way that a lot of bands like the Locust do, even though teenage me somehow heard more in them than just hollow stylized self-regarding turd music for the same brand of turds that I now see it to be. CWV save themselves from that fate though, because there is nothing "sassy" about this record (remember that tendency? certainly didn't age well) and the lyrics are stark and unapologetic (if a little zany in places) and play off well against the music's opaque tunelessness. The songs are way more standard sped-up, distorted hardcore than I remember, but are definitely still raging and definitely have me a little regretful that I never got that crazy looking boxed set. That the label that released this, Twelve Hour Turn (another "special place in my heart" band), The Swarm, and even the terribly monikered but I-won't-apologise-awesome I Hate Myself, is now mired in heinous beer-d koozie plaid rock "lol" bro rape joke cheese fest singalong chest pump hell, is a savage downturn, but hey. Hey.

THE RADIATORS FROM SPACE – TV Tube Heart (Chiswick) – So I said I hated talking about records as a commodity, but that doesn't, I don't think, preclude a fascination in the strange enduring physicality-in-the-age-of-digital they still have, especially the real old ones. DNA swabbing some sleeves like this one, released on Chiswick, first purchased in 1977, would yield some pretty varied results, I imagine. I can totally see, in that sense, why first pressings have a charm that some people just can't get over, the endurance of "the original," and all the hands that have touched it (eek) in age when everything is geared towards disposability. I picked up this LP, battered to shit, from the record exchange in Notting Hill after my dearly departed to Australia friend Maya paid me in vouchers for the place, for proofreading her dissertation. The only safe currency! Just like this one's sleeve, the songs on here are pop tunes perfectly ragged and ripped around the edges. "Contact" is the clear hit on here. Obviously it has the record exchange's trademark stickers with the squares that illustrate just what kind of bargain you are getting, and also how long the record has sat in the shop, as they mark down the price each week. Just inside the sleeve, there are marks of many a previous resell, including one from a shop called "John Sheridan's" of Hull, proprietor of all kinds of second hand wonders, it seems. If the trend for marking one's records with a name/something to show what belonged to who ('sup Tim Yo) had persisted, we would have an even less ethereal history to wonder over — I love the idea that each record would come with a list of previous owners inside the dustsleeve, too, but it may just be a little late to introduce such a trend.

THE MEN – Leave Home (Sacred Bones) – I bought this a while ago and (see above) somehow hadn't listened to it yet. It seems that bands talked about excitedly by punks need not, in these heady times, necessarily fulfil the criteria of being anything other than loud and exciting. The first song on this record, after the quiet intro, sounds very much like the Stone Roses on weak acid. That I've read reviews of this previously that dropped in some heavy shoegaze references is probably testament to the known fact that people who get paid money to review music often only get as far as the first song, those lazy payroll fucks we all hate. Right? Right. Second tune is a huge, bombastic garage stomper, but the parts are chewed up and spat out and it makes for a confusing, urgent listen, a feeling that continues all the way through. Weirdly, I feel like I can hear elements of the more recent Fucked Up material, major-y sounding euphoric chords nailed against hardcore drums, but in being largely instrumental, The Men don't have the jarring incongruity that Fucked Up's laudable experiments in that field sometimes fall victim to. This recording's also beautifully orchestrated, like really full and blown-out without sounding like that was their only instruction. The third tune, "Think," is a sweetly furious banger. When the singer does come on strong with the vengeful admonishments, he sounds like Greg Mantooth of Slices (and *MRR,* way back when), at least in this song. The last song on the LP is a slow, unexpected "throw the drums down a flight of stairs" moment, quite different from the others on this side, bringing in almost Bastard Noise levels of misanthropic bass nadirism, especially at its drums-and-coughing-fit conclusion — one that, so the liner notes inform, reaches a climax worthy of Justice Yeldham with two "glass and metal" players credited. The other side continues the separate but equal feel of each song, so much so that it almost feels like a mixtape, something that probably comes about because the players switch up roles a lot. The guy playing clarinet (apparently?! I must have missed that) on Side A, lends some Goo-era-T.Moore-meets-Piciotto vibes to vocal proceedings on "Bataille." Seriously, I don't know, this is fucking great. File it next to that Merchandise record for an LP that blows holes in what you expect, demanding 100% attention. Whether they'll pick one of these styles to plump for, and go Rites of Spring or Spacemen 3, is still up for debate, but the fusion is not too much to stomach as far as I'm concerned. If this is a sign of where punk-rooted bands will be going, or where the new shoots of that same spirit are growing fastest, whatever in the hell that might mean, I'm not sure, but I hope they prove me right.

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For real, it's going to get cold here soon, I'm staying home, maybe I'll leave the house in June. 'Til then, send care parcels to 80 Lilford Road, London, SE5 9HR.

MUTANT ROCK!
SHIVA ADDANKI

Two 12"s, a 7"s, and a Zine

Fuck, I've been trying to get my act together to string together sentences for my column since before it was late, now I don't have much of a choice but to feebly offer a jumbled mess of all I have. Last month, I wrote about how zines today transcend their predecessors with an intense fervor about their commitment to the music they cover, and now, ironically, I'm writing this at a time where I can barely squeeze time in my day to write anything for my own zine. Woe is me.

CONDOMINIUM – *Warm Home* 12" – What a band. I think this is the first record they've put out since I started writing a zine, which was a reasonably long time ago now, especially for an active band to have spent between releases. Their best and most widely responded to 7" (or so it seems), *Barricade,* sported two of the most bleak, genuinely depressed sounding songs I've ever heard. If you're in the right mood, the sounds of spiteful vocals sputtering out over gurgling bass guitars and noisy guitar squall will intersect with your state of mind so perfectly that you'll feel it was made just for you to glare at the world to. If you were feeling nice and chipper up until then, it'll ruin your day.

People threw late-'Flag comparisons at 'em, and they kind of warrant this, but there is a key difference: later period Black Flag isn't all that great to listen to, despite its intended emanations of guitar driven bleakness and misanthropy, and wouldn't be note worthy had their early history not been so fruitful and Ginn's guitar playing been so legendary. On the other hand, Condominium delivers a hell of a barrage that keeps you listening, trimmings, members, history, and reverence aside. Condominium doesn't make any attempts to outline what kind of niche you could shove them into. They align themselves with the same kind of ambiguity that marks bands like the Minutemen, Saccharine Trust, Big Black, or the Wipers (maybe). Those bands all seem intrinsically punk to me yet they exert no semblance of snot or reactionary attitude and dumbness that makes bands like Cülo or Deaf Mutations so essential. Condominium has that same kind of "artiness" (or disregard of convention) intertwined in their sound that makes those bands I mentioned before so notable. Like those bands, their records have none of the hotheaded petulant squawk of bands like the Kids, Teen Idles, Crazy Spirit, or Sudor. Condominium has a much more volatile bent to their cold, depressed, and spiteful sounding music. It doesn't sound like they are taking obvious cues from any particular band, hardcore or not, or like they are trying to sound a certain way. Rather, it sounds like their brains have been so fried and their bodies have been so scarred by hardcore music (literally, spot the Void tattoo on the insert) that it simply pours out of them naturally, and in a much more twisted form than anyone could possibly contrive. The lyrics, artwork, sound, and general attitude express a withering, sarcastic sort of indifference to the conventions of people focusing their energy in enclosed spaces (namely, music scenes). The title track seems to make a scathing comment on the hardcore scene, sporting a kind writhing sarcasm and spite that marked Saccharine Trust lyrics. At moments on the record, the band just completely goes off into weird, uncomfortable and dragging ambient noise, sounding inside out, convoluted, and chewed. The comparisons to other bands are endless, but only found in minutia, like with Dawn of Humans or Crazy Spirit. The full product of their sound is very much in a league of its own, striking discordant chords in nerves I didn't even know I had.

The finished product of this record simply emanates the kind of passionate commitment of people who trudge straight from working a retail job to their practice space to spend hours on end hammering out songs and pushing their sound to the logical extreme. I'm talking about the old-style, revered commitment that is characteristic of SST bands. I have spent hours on end just flipping this record over and over again, lying on my bed and staring up at the ceiling, taking a much-needed break from the bustle and bullshit of the weekday. I only picked it up three weeks ago but it is already a record with which I am intensely familiar. Condominium is one of the many current bands transcending the mere status of derivative repetition dribble to make something distinctly punk that transcends boundaries. I'm gonna have to make a tape of this record soon, for fear that these grooves aren't gonna last as long as I need them to.

MILK MUSIC – *Beyond Living* 12" – It's strange when a DIY band's music hits you in a much more personalized way than usual. I recently found out that Olympia's Milk Music played in NYC over summer, which surprised me, since I've been listening to a rip of their 12"— I only just bought the record—for ages, without ever thinking about the possibility that they were involved in the same community as bands like HPP or Sex Vid, and there was a possibility that they would be playing a place like 538 Johnson in Brooklyn (I don't know if they played there, it's just an example). I thought about it after I found that out and realized I could never imagine sharing the connection I personally felt to their music with a crowd of sweating, smiling people rubbing up against me. If they never put out another record it wouldn't really phase me, something about this one and this one only just has this isolated connection that is hard to fully articulate. I've spent countless nights listening to this 12" on my headphones before sleeping, staring up at the ceiling and trying to process the jumble of my thoughts into a subtle enough mess for me to sleep. This has been the music I listen to when I am able to embrace solitude, it's welcoming enough to let my mind wander yet prickly enough to not warrant some ethereal nostalgic gaze. I couldn't imagine listening to this band with just one other person in the room; I would feel intruded upon. I have become so used to the melancholic crooning, thickened noisy guitars, and desperate melodies of this record as part of my own caved in little world that I view it as a personal soundscape for me to let my mind wander against. I guess that's the mark of a well-written record; I don't even know how to analyze this 12" in terms of anything but my own little vacuum view of it. Comparisons, context, and all the usual trimmings of your average well written review are probably all at arms reach, but I'm not even gonna bother. This is a great fucking record. I'll leave it at that.

CAREER SUICIDE – *Cherry Beach* 7" – You know those records where there is one song that is just so goddamn good that the others simply don't matter? This is one of those. I haven't let the needle slide off past the grooves of "Cherry Beach" into "Means to no End" in a very long time. What's the use? Sometimes it's in the recording, sometimes it's in the desperation of the vocals, or in the stomping beat, or in the searing white hot guitar squeals. In this case, it's all of those things. From that first snot-inflected scream, belted out like it was coming from a preschooler's livid tantrum, I'm hooked. The guitars create a layer of warm, tube-powered noise that permeates over the whole recording to create this feeling of impenetrable "bigness," where the only things in your head are screaming, down-stroked power chords, simple guitar squeals made epic, snotty vocals, and that timeless beat that makes you feel like a foot soldier stomping through an endless warzone. After all this was said and done, and my mind was in a fittingly dumfounded state, salivating for more, I let the needle run down to the end, and sure enough, the other songs are pretty good too. It's a strange notion that people aging beyond the 30 year old mark are still making music that stomps with such a fervent snottiness, maybe it's a not-so-subtle testament to the fact that this world is fucked beyond repair, or another example of people not wanting to let go of their youth. I hope for the sake of my enjoyment that it's the former.

General Speech fanzine – The guy who did *Evil Minded*, a zine that influenced me greatly in its early issues, and one that I'll always remember despite my not seeing eye to eye with some of his points in the later issues, has a new zine. It's better. It's everything raw, unpolished, and unabashed about Tom's personal connection to punk wound up into one half-sized fanzine that is slapped with a stamp and shipped off to you for free. This is the fanzine equivalent to a piss raw, 4-track recorded demo tape with a cardboard box sounding drums, broken amps, and sore throated vocals. The zine opens with a rough guideline of what his intentions are with making a fanzine, intercut with his opinions and reasoning as to why he believes certain things. Then you have a killer interview with Inservibles from Mexico that would make even the shittiest zine worth reading. Interviews with them in particular always carry over that same raw, helpless, and desperate tone that they have and their perspective on playing punk music never fails to interest me. There is a big worship piece on Death Side that is cool to me more because of the enthusiasm expressed by the editor than anything else. I still don't really fully understand the widespread infatuation with them. The zine ends off with a stream of conscious style review piece that works well with the general tone of the zine. This fanzine retains that same immediacy and urgency that marks some of the punk bands, with the sloppy and impassioned bent of much of the music that Tom seems to enjoy most.

Write: 2964 Winter Garden, Unit D/ Lexington, KY 40517/ USA to get a copy.

That's it for now; hopefully next month will be a little more coherent. Get in touch at eggmangel@gmail.com for anything in particular, but most urgently if you want to sell me (or give me) your copies of *Killed By Hardcore* # 2 and 3, your Vile LP, or the first two Repos 12"s.

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DISCHARGE

Last month I talked about the old, stale, and rotten collection of Swedish hardcore fanzines that belongs to my old partner-in-crime Ola Beglert. The collection is currently on loan and in safe possession here with me in London. The condition of this loan was that I had to write something about the zines in *MRR* and that I'll return the zines next time I go to Sweden. The latter condition is due to be broken immediately, as I am off to Sweden in a few days, but never mind, here's the first chapter: the introduction! To set the scene, here's a quick rough and ready history of Swedish punk as I like to think of it; the following periods all overlap and are meant just to contextualize a little:

1975 – 1978: Classic punk era. We've all read the US and UK history books, and pretty much everything applies equally to Sweden (as well as countless other countries), so no need for me to go into much further here... I don't know which was the first Swedish punk fanzine, but I know there was several of the *Sniffing Glue* variety. What I do know is that KRIMINELLA GITARRER is often cited as the first Swedish punk band. As the story goes, someone went to London (two hour flight yo!) back in 1975 (or whatever) and just happened to stroll into a bar in Soho were SEX PISTOLS played. Two weeks later Sweden had a punk band, the aforementioned. Please can someone release the KRIMINELLA GITARRER demos in a faithfully reproduced manner and on a suitable vinyl format? It's just as raw and distorted as the early RAMONES demos, if not more so. Either way it's incredibly good stuff to be honest. I know of a similar story relating to how hardcore punk got to Finland. Someone visiting London brought back copies of DISCHARGE's *Reality of War* with him to Finland and shortly thereafter the world had TERVEET KÄDET (arguably the most important hardcore band after DISCHARGE). Small things can change the course of history.

1979 – 1983: Classic hardcore punk era. This era featured both very early hardcore bands and a few years in groundbreaking HC bands, a lot of them reverend today by punks in all corners of the globe such as HEADCLEANERS, MISSBRUKARNA, ANTI-CIMEX, SKITSLICKERS, DISARM, CRUDE SS, and many, many others. It seems to me that there were a feverous number of hardcore zines written around 1982-1985. I mean it's as if pretty much everyone in a hardcore band made a zine. For now, I'd like to note that a lot of zines from this early HC period were, honestly, not that great. The interview questions are laughably poor, but then you remember that quite young teenagers often wrote these zines.

1984 – 1987: Second wave of hardcore, with faster, noisier, crossover experimentation etc. Old bands mostly still around, but newer ones include SVART PARAD, RAPED TEENAGERS, BRUTAL PERSONAL, TOTALITÄR, NO SECURITY, etc. After 1985 zines seemed to come into their own, as no doubt punks were bored reading the naivety of the first HC zines. Zine are now starting to be ironical, often wildly comical, but at the same time pessimistic not only about the world, religion, and politics, but also about punk itself, as frustration took over the earlier optimism and hope of making a change.

1988 – 1993: More of the same, but the scene seems to have gotten smaller as older punks dropped out and many older bands split up. Reading old zines you note that punks are no longer thinking about political stuff as urgently as before. Gone are the interview questions about anarchism, etc. Lyrically, it's as pessimistic of a time as ever. Musically, there is further experimentation and cross breeding with other genres. Like all over the rest of the world, new genres like grind, noise, and crust become more popular. Notable bands *symbolising* this period (even if they might have been around in earlier phase) are G-ANX, DOM DÄR, FILTHY CHRISTIANS, etc. In the late '80s, you get a number of HC zines "organically" covering other underground music genres like grind, death, and trash metal. Some of these zines have a much more professional approach to fanzine making. Layouts are cleared up and the quality of writing takes a quantum leap, but sadly, if this was an improvement it was also a move away from writing about hardcore punk.

1994 – 1997: The changing of the old guard that begun by early 1990s is almost complete. One the hand, this is a period of watering-down the "hard" in hardcore, as melodic Swedish-language punk bands ("trall-punk," "la-la-là-punk," or "happy punk") gets massively popular, probably in reaction to the full-frontal nonsense of grind and noise. At the same time, however, the Finns behind Finn records and Sika Äpärä zine, and old warrior Mats at Distortion To Hell records do their part to shape a generation of punks into believing in a mythical Swedish tradition of "råpunk" with a strict diet of DISCHARGE and ANTI-CIMEX, KIR and homebrew. This is "Käng-core," perhaps the Swedish equivalent to crust core, but a positively confused mess of D-beat and raw punk. On the fanzine side of things, there were a lot of trall-punk zines in this decade, but *Sika Äpärä* zine pretty much changed everything. As for me, I started doing trall-punk zines –at least in the sense that for *Sika Äpärä* followers, any zine that did not solely focus on DISCHARGE, ANTI-CIMEX and booze was trall-punk!—but later on I did my own *Sika Äpärä* rip-off called *Jävel Mag*, with Beglert.

1998 – 2005: The despicable happy pop punk of the first half of the 1990s, trall-punk, has now morphed into what is incorrectly termed "skate-punk" (because real skateboarders don't care too much about music, while the so-called "skate-punks" are actually pop-rockers who dress like skateboarders but who don't actually skate!), i.e. punk of the NOFX-school. Meanwhile straight edge, at least what is the second wave of Swedish sXe, gets immensely popular thanks to REFUSED as well as popular media's obsession with firebombed hot dog stands and debates about school kids going vegan. As for raw punk, this is the neo-hardcore punk period. D-beat takes on new meaning. Cliff's massive project for a modern hardcore sound that he began playing with on the last CIMEX LP takes off with his new band DRILLER KILLER, and that sound is developed into epic arena D-beat by bands like WOLFBRIGADE, DISFEAR, SKITSYSTEM, and a number of despicable non-Swedish bands. WARCOLLAPSE and COUNTERBLAST are also good examples of the scene during these years. *Sika Äpärä* rip-offs dominate the Swedish fanzine world (more or less) while *Close Up* represents a post-hardcore underground scene that is "only into the music" (and worse, metal music!).

2005 – today: The post-epic D-beat period. While the good news is that there are a lot of bands and a lot of variation in punk and hardcore genres, there's a lot of shit bands, in my opinion. But there also a lot of great bands like SKITKIDS (RIP), FY FAN, HERÄTYS (*"ei leiki!"*), etc. The ten-year old trend of old bands reforming is showing no sign of slackening off, sadly. But overall, like internationally, this is a very exciting time for hardcore. As for zines, *Sika Äpärä* rip-offs finally slack off with some great hardcore zines in the first half of decade covering all the best international HC and crust. It's funny to note how immensely popular Disclose became, because a lot of zines interview Kawakami. Not surprisingly, you soon got bands like GIFTGASATTACK. Ironically, the most popular Swedish HC zine of the 2000s must be *Skitliv!* This being a neo-*Sika Äpärä* rip-off zine (and a hoax to boot) that looked back at the Distortion To Hell bands of the 1990s with teary-eyed nostalgia.

Gaaah! To be continued next month!!!! Please note I have a wish list of Swedish hardcore fanzines so if you're donating, trading or selling get in touch with me first (address below).

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In closing I'd like to draw attention to a fond memory I have from the summer of 1993. I was fourteen and the Ramones were doing what many figured would be their last ever world tour. They'd do one show in Sweden, at the Hultsfred festival. Problem was I was only fourteen-years old and I did not have any cash for it, and I was probably just too young for it as well. Being a parent in 2011 and looking back, I am almost shocked thinking about a fourteen-year old going away for a week of alcoholic warfare under the pretence of seeing rock bands at a festival. Anyway, going to the festival was out of the question but it broke my heart at the time. The fact that some older friends at school were going did not make it seem any less unfair. The week of the festival I was at my grandparents in the countryside. I remember it was a really warm and sunny day. We were doing some gardening, and as always the radio was on and it was live from Hultsfred. I have always loved hanging out with my grandparents so I don't think I minded the work but that much, but I remember I kept hoping to hear the Ramones. But they kept playing bloody Rage Against the Machine and I think maybe Red Hot Chilli Peppers.

On Friday the 23rd of October 2011 my beloved grandmother Lillian Larsson finally passed away peacefully in her sleep, sitting in her wheelchair at the elderly home in Tidaholm, Sweden. She had been suffering a terminal nerve illness for a little over a decade. For a painfully slow decade her physical body had completely been eradicated, but tyrannically, her mind had remained conserved trapped in a captive, dysfunctional body. When I visited her with my daughter earlier this year we experienced a very brief and intense window into her old self, when she recognized me and we exchanged a few words. My uncle said after those brief flashes of near-normal physical functioning rarely happened any longer. It was, as you can imagine, very emotional. We all knew that the end would come very soon. We'd known for some time actually, as invariably the illness without fail concludes fatally within a period of up to fifteen years from the first manifestation of early symptoms. This illness is very brutal and not only does it come with a definite death sentence, it is one that is completely irreversible. In fact, it is the very final in hopelessness. It is a big relief to know that she is no longer suffering and that she will be able to finally have her graceful rest, alongside my greatly missed grandfather Evan Larsson.

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Hey, in other news. My new zine is sold-out from me. Get it from distros. The next zine was due next week in time for the NEKROMANTIKER, the WANKYS, INSERVIBLES, and the INJECTIONS squat gig here in London, but it won't because of the death in the family. It'll be out in another few weeks! In the meanwhile, here's an essential demo for you to chase for: SUN CHILDREN SUN demo CD-R. It's EXTINTOS and VIVI-PUNX members playing a mad futuristic leftfield punk that sounds a bit like a mix between MINUTEMEN and ISTERISMO!!! Finally, I am very sorry to reveal that I am no longer the manager of underground tango band Helmut. *Never trust a friend!* Drop me a letter to More Noize Charade, 31 Woodville Road, E17 7Er London, UK, or write me via slobodanburgher@gmail.com

SPLATTER ZONE
WITH MARISSA MAGIC

By the time this has gone to press the story will have progressed and everything I say herein may be proven completely wrong or completely right or completely void, but I want to talk about the Occupy Wall Street movement, which at this point is swiftly gaining momentum. At this moment in time there is very little news coverage that I've seen, and the news coverage that does happen either downplays events or takes the side of authority. 700 people were arrested on the Brooklyn Bridge after shutting it down; 20,000 people are watching the live stream. Similar actions are springing up across the country, from small towns to big cities. I'm really glad that the protesters have taken aim at the banks and not just the government, because really, corporate America (you know, banks and shit) is truly the root of all of this fucking shit, duh. The American government at this point is a total puppet.

Even Obama's feeble attempts at raising taxes on the rich not only got immediately shut down by the Republicans, but heard far and wide was the outcry of brainwashed citizens who believe that taxes to fund things to better everything for everyone equals communism and that somehow treating corporations as individuals with no responsibilities or repercussions will somehow create jobs. Of course me being me, I have mainly been reading critiques of the protests. These critiques claim that the grievances and goals of OWS protesters are not clear, and that so far the movement is mainly middle class white movement, that it leaves a lot of people behind. At this point the protesters in New York have made public a list of grievances, and the overall catchphrase of the movement has become "we are the 99%."

For a long time now I have had the mindset that corporate America is too big and bad and well established, and as such it can never be dismantled and/or destroyed. If you read what I write, it may seem like I believe that the world can be changed, that revolution can happen, or that major culture shifts are possible. I write about these things not because I necessarily believe change will come, but because it helps me make sense of the bullshit around me. When I read feminist theory it's depressing because it's reflecting the reality of the world and it won't change much; books written in the early '90s and even in the '90s still stand to be scary relevant. I read about and talk about these things to make me feel less crazy, less delusional, and that there is a reason I feel the way I feel day in and day out. Yeah, I like to talk about it, but in reality I don't think things will ever change. Everything is so deeply established.

The day that the Brooklyn Bridge was shut down my roommate came home to try and round up people to join the Occupy protest in San Francisco. My friend and I quickly took to the internets, reading firsthand reports published on blogs and watching the New York live stream. It suddenly seemed real, and hope glimmered; maybe a revolution was possible after all? We made plans to go to San Francisco to swell the numbers the next day. It felt real, something was happening and more would happen soon. For the first time, revolution actually maybe felt possible to me, and I had a fleeting glimmer of hope. I woke up the next morning and tuned back into the live feed in New York. To say the least, it was discouraging. It was mid-day on a weekend and for some reason they were just playing this video loop over and over again of what seemed like a clip that Anonymous (the hacker group that has had a major hand in all the BART protests in San Francisco of late) had produced that seemed to be basically a greatest hits of police brutality at the protests set to a techno soundtrack. It was kind of a bummer, like weird unnecessary propaganda. Not to say that police brutality isn't real or not fucked, it is and it is, it just seemed like a play to convince the general public that the protesters are morally superior, and that moral superiority is the playing field that determines who's wrong and who's right. For one, corporate America thinks we're a bunch of wingnut amorals anyway, so it doesn't matter if we are peaceful or violent, they will still look at us as heathens. Secondly, morality has very little to do with what's right and wrong, and playing into that often dissolves into a game of "you think you are morally superior? How about this!" In the end it means nothing. Corporate America will not bend to our demands because we are "morally superior," they will never give us anything; we have to take it (i.e. if you haven't already, close yr accounts with corporate banks, switch to a credit union).

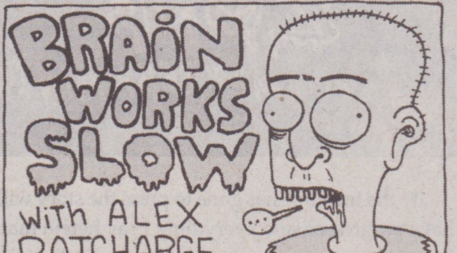
Anyway, I ended up getting distracted with other things and never made the trek over to the Federal Reserve in San Francisco (yes, I am kind of an armchair activist). Reports from the frontline were kind of depressing. My roommate reported that every time he asked what the plan was he got the vague answer of "we work by committee." Other people I know had gone to join the protests and were faced with an unorganized mess. Since then, as in the last twenty-four hours, I've heard that things are looking up and quickly taking shape. That committees have come together, plans have been hatched, organization is occurring.

At some point my roommate and I got into the topic of how to organize a revolution, how to take the initial spark and sustain it. I related this story about when I was talking to my friend who was pretty deeply involved in the riot grrl movement and I asked her if she realized that it was a hugely influential movement while she was in the midst of it. She said that it really felt like a myth that they kept repeating until it was real. This makes sense, almost like a large-scale fake-it-til-you-make-it. I believe that thought applies to this Occupy situation too. There is this aerial picture of the protests in New York where the streets are completely thick with people. It's making its way through the tunnels of social networking and of course it is coupled with questions like is it real? Is it a real picture? Or just a picture of something else, like another time when the streets were clogged with people? Is it photoshopped? Altered somehow? What matters is that if it's real or fake doesn't actually matter. What matters is it brings the pipe dream closer to reality. Like, maybe if people see that picture maybe they will begin to believe that its real and then they will join in and then it will really become real.

Of course as with everything on the fucking planet, there are faults with the OWS movement. While I think a united 99% against the 1% is the best way to go about it, this slogan also implies that the 99% of us are on the same level, flattening the disparity between a college educated kid from a middle class background who can't get a job to a single mother in the projects who is working three jobs and is still forced to skip meals. As with any movement the loudest voices are the ones with the access to the most things: leisure time, education, and resources such as the internet and copy machines. This skews what the grievances and demands are and often leaves those with little or no voice in the dust, again being considered last or written off entirely. The things I've read, the things beyond critiques, pieces that relate personal anecdotes seem navel gazing and cut off from reality. I read a piece written by JD Samson the other day that whines about not being able to afford a jet set life style in New York on a freelance artists salary. There are people on blogs and online forums complaining about things like not being able to pay their Smartphone bills and rent on their one bedroom apartment in San Francisco while trying to chase their American dream of moving to a big city and making it as a musician.

Yes, in a utopian world the government should subsidize the arts. I want dearly for this to happen, and I think it should. But currently, there are many more pressing cases of people getting fucked by corporations, banks, and the government than this. At the moment, people are left homeless by foreclosures and left hungry and hopeless by job loss or no job in the first place, it's not simply a loss of comfort but a loss of basic human rights. Not trying to play the "who has it the worst" game but really? JD, stop buying expensive jeans.

But still, even with the problems and shortfalls, I hope this movement is real. I hope something happens. I might even leave my armchair for a second and actually hit the streets for the first time in a while. Maybe this can actually be done. Maybe things will actually change. Maybe by the time you are reading this it already has. I sincerely hope so.



Living away from France, one of the first cultural differences that I noticed and that took a while to get used to was the way people said hi. In France, usually, men shake hands and women give one kiss on each cheek; if it's a woman and a man saying hi, then it's kisses for everyone. Yay!—Or yuck!—depending how you see it. It's a bit different in punk circles, where, like in families or show business, everyone kisses everyone and not too many people shake hands. Don't ask me why, probably something to do with tryin' to destroy gender dynamics, as punk rockers here are very serious people. They're not the subjects of this column, however, so let's stay focused. This, the whole shaking hands and giving kisses thingy, is something that you never really question or consciously realize when you've spent all your life immersed in French culture; it's just like that, is all. So when I first arrived on the other side of the world, I was shocked to discover that people weren't doing any of this! In fact, they thought I was a weirdo for even thinking of kissing anyone I was meeting for the first time. Over there people would just discreetly wave their hand to say hi, or just say the damn word, duh. It was another world to get used to, with different customs, but I quickly started to like it simply coz it felt easier, perhaps even more natural. From what I understand it is sort of the same in North America? I mean, you gotta understand, here in France saying hi is a *big deal* — when you enter a room full of people, the appropriate thing to do is to shake every hand and kiss every cheek. If you don't do it, more often than not you're deemed asocial, probably an asshole; at best people will just think you've got the flu or something. The more you think about it the weirder it gets, but that's the point: *you're not supposed to think about it*. This is a tradition, and traditions are heavily guarded from change by a mass of angry people who just wouldn't have things any other way. Why? I dunno, and neither do they. But it's like that.

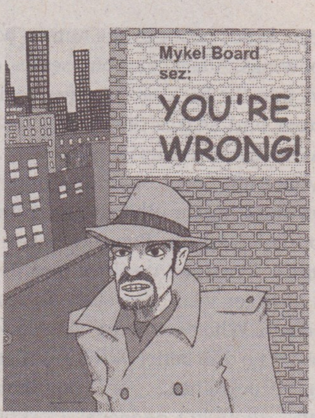
When I started writing columns for *MRR*, one of my first ideas was to cover the world of cultural differences I knew of, particularly between France and other countries I had visited or lived in. That's partly why my initial goal was to write about French punk squats — because the way these places work 'n exist is typical to Europe, but even so, every European country has different laws and customs regarding squatting, making the squat scene of each country unique. Did you know that, for a long time, to squat a house in Holland, all you had to do was check that it had been empty for more than a year, get in there, install a chair, a table, and a mattress, call the authorities to let them know you lived there, and that was it? Of course there were always complications but that was how simple the initial idea was. Like everywhere, things have been changing fast over there and I'd be surprised if this law was still applicable, but two or three years ago it still was. In Amsterdam you could even squat boats on one of the rivers in the city — once when I was on tour there, we slept on this giant black boat with a big black flag in the city center. It was pretty amazing. In fact, for years one of my plans for retirement was to go live in Amsterdam and squat a boat. I could totally picture my sixty-year old self chilling with the ol' dog to my side, reading a good book, and drinking cold water on my proud free ship just next to the sidewalk every morning for the rest of my days. The thing is that it wasn't some kind of crazy dream — it was attainable. Knowing this was very comforting in the moments where "no future" sounded more like a creepy reality than an empty '77 slogan.

One thing about French punk and activist squats that always surprises foreigners, especially those from outside Europe, is that a lot of events don't have a set door price. Instead, the cost of the entrance often is "prix libre," which more or less means "donations" but seems to be understood a bit differently by different people. This is a really common practice around here and while it has of course its ups and downs, it tends to work really well, at least in bigger cities with established punk scenes. The idea is that no one should get denied the entrance of a gig for being too poor — after all, punk is music by broke motherfuckers, for broke motherfuckers. But the idea is also to make everyone aware of the costs of a gig, the fact that touring bands need gas money, etc., so that they know no one is making big bucks out of it and if we want to keep seeing good gigs, we should support the bands, organisers, etc., however we can. At a recent show for a well-known Yankee punk band, the organiser told me that some members got pissed off at him when they first heard the entrance was gonna be on donations. They told him they really needed money to pay for their expenses such as gear and van rental, and that they needed to pay their rent back home, etc., all this stuff that only the ultimate retard wouldn't be aware of. The organiser felt a bit insulted and fed up — he had been organising punk gigs for more than a decade, including for other bands with members of this one, and he knew very well what he was doing. The gig was packed, and at the end of the night he handed the band 600€ (roughly $850), which is, on average, three times what any DIY punk band usually can expect at a gig around here. On top of that, the show was a benefit, and more than a 1000€ were raised to support the place. Sure, this is an extreme example—the gig was unusually big by French punk standards—but the point is that it worked perfectly, despite the pessimism of the American punk veterans from the band. In my city, over the years, I've seen dozens of examples of bands getting a more than decent sum of money for gigs on donations. One thing to take into consideration here is that pretty often, in these places, the bar is cheap but has a set price, usually one euro for a beer, and people at these gigs drink *a lot*, so that is another way to give money to the band. In any case, what I mean is that it works around here and I think it's a great way of doing things. I don't know how it is where you live, but that's the point, too – cultural differences. Don't freak out if you show up somewhere and things aren't like what you're used to, just wait and see how people make things work where they live. More often than not, you'll be pleasantly surprised. Sometimes it will be the opposite, sure, but that's the rule everywhere, donations or not.

As I'm only days away from flying to the US, people keep telling me all these crazy things about what I should expect from there. They tell me that no one drinks or smokes at American punk shows if they are all ages, that people only drink when the gigs are in bars, and that bar gigs aren't that exciting anyway (this I can believe), so basically, no alcohol at DIY punk gigs. I dunno if that is entirely true but this is such a strange concept to me, as I've always been used to everyone being wasted at any and every gig, whether it is in a squat, a bar, or a DIY space of some kind. Nice to see some change, I guess. People tell me that I should expect to be given hugs even by complete strangers – yeah right, just go ahead and try me. At some point someone even told me that it wasn't allowed to smoke in the streets of San Francisco, a fact I found out a day later was total bullshit, but, hey, what do I know, right? People tell me everyone lives in big houses over there, that small Euro-type apartments aren't that common, that people never eat inside their houses but always outside because restaurants are really good and cheap, that everyone hates French people, etc., etc. Listening to all these crazy generalisations is quite entertaining, but experience has taught me that generalisations are always exactly what the term implies: an overemphasis on one particular cultural difference, a gross exaggeration to make one's point more easily understood, etc. Stereotypes tend to be half truth, half blatant lie, and it's pretty funny to listen to my friends telling me stories about their experiences of America as seen through the eyes of Frenchies. We all have a lot of preconceived ideas about different countries even when we haven't been there, ideas that come from a mix of what people told us, what we've heard, read, and seen on TV, prejudices that are so deeply rooted that even when we eventually experience a place first hand, we tend to see what we want to see and just confirm what we thought we knew, unintentionally blind to what we couldn't have guessed. The beauty of travelling is to forget everything we thought we knew, get ready to be challenged, and come back home with new ideas. See ya on the other side!

Endnotes:

1. Royal Headache just put out the best album of 2011. Get it.
2. Could someone reissue the *Attitudes* 10" by The Brat from L.A? On vinyl, not CD? Please?
3. If you live in Malaysia or the Philippines, go see Coche Bomba on their Southeast Asian tour! Chaos guaranteed.
4. ratcharge@gmail.com



> *"A person's sexuality is so much more than one word "gay." No one refers to anyone as just "hetero" because that doesn't say anything. Sexual identity is broader than a label."*
>
> — *Gus Van Sant*

Los Gallos me dan dinero. Las mujeres me lo quitan. "The cocks give me money. The women take it away." It's written... white on brown... on the front of my hat... a baseball-style hat I bought in Mexico — made in China, of course.

The hat is on my head. My head is on my neck. My neck is on my body, the ass of which is on a United Airlines seat. The seat is fastened to the inside of a Boing 737. I write this in the air, over the hills of Kentucky, where, like in Mexico, you can go to cockfights if you want. I'm thinking about my own cock, which hasn't earned me money in over 35 years, but has cost me plenty, not only from *the women*. I'm headed toward the detestable Phoenix. Then, the much better Tucson. Then, the heavenly Agua Prieta, Mexico.

I'm leaving behind hellish New York with its TV cameras on every street, ID checks in tall buildings, bag checks in the subway, and a new law that criminalizes *attendance* at a dog or cockfight. You don't have to actually *do* anything to violate the law. You just have to *be* there. *That's* illegal.

Flash to scene one: Chickens... beaks clipped... five-dozen squeezed together in an area smaller than my apartment. Wing-to-wing, feather-to-feather, unable to move, to stretch, to do anything other than lay eggs. When they can't do that anymore, WHAM! grab a leg, lay 'em down, ffffft, off comes the head. Do they die instantly? Oh no. The expression "running around like a chicken with its head cut off" didn't come from nowhere. They live, those suckers, heads twitching in a floor pile... bodies not dead... kicking... in unimaginable pain... until enough blood drips to the concrete floor to send them to hen heaven.

Not one second of painless life while alive. Even a horrible death must be a relief for them.

Flash to scene two: A concrete ring in a small, enclosed stadium. Two trained cocks face off. They stare at each other like professional boxers.

Eye to eye, heads bobbing like human boxers. A flutter of wings. Attack! One bird settles, digging its claws into the back or the other. Half flight, the bottom bird shakes off the top one, backs away. A thin trickle colors its feathers.

They face off... dive... half fly... flutter... each intent on defeating the other. It's cold and brave. These birds have balls. I've seen them trained, these birds. I've seen the love and care their owners have for them. I've seen the tears shed at each death. Who lives better? The cocks or the chickens? Who dies better? Which is illegal?

Yeah, Cockfights... or dogfights... or bullfights... shouldn't be illegal. Cockfights are more humane and less painful than the day-to-day lives of America's billions of chickens. Dogfights? Hah! Those dogs live better than any of America's billions of cattle. Dogfights are illegal because people don't have pet cows. Cows aren't cute.

I've written enough making fun of vegetarians, but at least they have the integrity that most supporters of this law don't have. For vegetarians, cruelty hidden is the same as cruelty for sport. You gotta admire that.

That's all an aside... a tangent. What I really wanna write about is *being* vs. *doing*. I want to write about laws that criminalize *existence,* in a place... at a time... like the NY law against *being* at an animal fight. You don't have to *do* anything... just *be* there, and it's illegal.

Right now, I'm on my way to the most notorious place that criminalizes *being*: Arizona. Uh oh! Mexican without a license. *Being* born in another country is against the law. The idea that a *person* (rather than an action) is illegal should be repugnant to all those of non-genocidal persuasion.

America is famous for crimes without victims. Drug laws (possession) and porn laws (possession) are the most obvious. Can you tell me who is hurt if you *possess* an internet file or a syringe of heroin? *Maybe* you are hurt, but it's your choice. In any case, it's gonna hurt a lot less than getting butt-fucked by a murderous cellmate.

Having is a kind of *being*. The object you have is simply *being* owned by you. The means of getting it should, perhaps, be prohibited. But *having*? It's as innocent as breathing.

I can't imagine a valid law prohibiting possession of *anything*. Stolen goods? *Stealing* already is against the law. Fair enough. Possession? No!

Your neighbor's head in a hatbox? *Murder* is already against the law. Your neighbor is just as dead with her head in your apartment as she is with her head in the dumpster outside.

Even having $36 billion, like the mayor of New York, shouldn't be illegal... though it should be controlled through taxes. The bankers who stole money from customers, who *did* something by tricking—or extorting—people into giving them money, the *doing* should be punished, not the *having*. (Though, nobody *has* $36 billion dollars without *doing* something bad to a whole lot of people.)

If it were legal to say it, I'd say Dick Cheney should be hung by the balls for setting up the torture in Guantánamo. (It probably is illegal to say that, so I won't.) But these are *actions*, not states of *being* or *having*. He *was* vice-president... BFD. It's what he *did*.

EEEEEE! SCREECH TO A STOP, Er. Er. Er. SWITCH GEARS!

Sometimes people confuse *being* with *doing*. Take "gay"—please! Of course homosex is a victimless act. It is no longer (in the US) a crime, and it shouldn't be. There's plenty of *doing* that, like *being*, shouldn't be illegal. Most, in fact. But it's important to distinguish the two.

No one *is* gay. It's not something you can *be*? What does it mean to *be* gay? Attracted to the "same" sex? Hah, every one is, in one way or another. Having sexual contact with the "same" sex? Are all prisoners "gay?" The idea that gay is *being* rather than *doing* is part of a big problem. *Being* gay is such a trap for a shitload of people. Guys begin to be attracted to other guys. They suddenly think, "Oh, I like the way he looks. I must *be* gay." Then suddenly their world changes.

Someone in *Real Jock,* the "gay health and fitness website," asks, "why do gay men like the same kind of music as fourteen-year old girls?" The letters section of *MRR* fills with people explaining how "emo" has become code for "gay." What does music have to do with the organs that enter your anus?

Glad you asked.

The answer, of course, should be *nothing*! It's only a connection if you think gay *is* something... *being* something. Johnny who, through his crush on Aiden, thinks he *is* gay, will suddenly become his own image of gaydom. He'll dress gay, like gay music, go to gay bars, a whole slew of things that match the image of what he thinks he *is*. Instead of just *doing* Aiden, and *being* whatever he wants, Johnny has to *be* gay. That's a trap. Johnny has given up his right to choose, because of what he thinks he *is*.

Part of why I respect tranny boys and girls so much is that they refuse to *be*. As much as society puts pressure on people (especially guys) to *be* gay or straight, there's that much more pressure put on people to *be* a man or a woman. Who can resist such pressure?

Everything is divided. Even the fuckin' bathrooms, for God's sake. Men/Women... choose one. *Be* one. Transsexuals refuse. They refuse to *be*. Or rather they *choose* to *be*. Screw your biology. It takes more balls for a boy to put on a dress than it does for one cock to face another in a concrete ring. And girls? Them too!

Ok, I have a twat. That doesn't mean I AM a girl. If I want, I can just be a boy with a cunt. You gotta love that! I know one— a boy with a cunt. S/he lives with a guy in a "homo relationship." "She" calls herself "he" and goes to gay bars and, as far as I know, gets popped in the poopshaft. (I only wish I could find out first hand.) S/He's a god(dess). The perfect person... immensely strong... refusing to be trapped by biology.

Instead of the poor homo saying, "I can't help it. It's biology. That's just the way I *am*." You've got someone saying, "Fuck biology! I *am* who I want to *be*."

If there's a master race, it's transsexuals.

Almost. Sometimes the bad guys are just too smart. I never watch television, but occasionally I see a newspaper. I read something about Cher's trans-son, Chaz Bono. And what? He's going to be on TV, selling soap in *Dancing With The Stars*. Ah America, if they don't make it illegal, they make it a commodity.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers will get god@mykelboard.com or blog viewers mykelsblogspot.com for live links and a chance to post comments on the column]

-->*They can sabotage too dept: Harpers Magazine* reports that a British intelligence group has announced that its operatives had sabotaged the launch of *Inspire*. That's an English-language magazine published by Al Qaeda supporters. How did they sabotage it? They inserted cupcake recipes into an article on bomb making.

-->*How to get free healthcare in America dept: The Gaston Gazette* reports that James Richard Verone walked into a bank and handed the teller a note demanding one dollar — and medical attention. Verone worked for Coca-Cola for seventeen years as a deliveryman before being fired. He is unable to handle work because of his poor health and he has no health insurance. The *Gazette* reports that Verone chose to rob the bank to so he'd be sent to jail. He felt that was the only way he could get free healthcare to treat his poor physical condition.

-->*Drink this! Dept: The Progressive* reports that the federal government is warning residents in Pavilion Wyoming not to drink the water. It is not only polluted, but also potentially explosive. The EPA issued a warning that said people should not drink their water and should use fans and ventilation when showering or washing clothes to avoid the risk of an explosion.

-->*Whose picture is that next to the "greedy" entry dept:* NJ Governor Chris Christie called public school teachers "greedy" for their $50,000 salaries and benefits. He forgot to mention, however, that his salary is $175,000 with free healthcare. He doesn't call for cuts to *that* salary.

-->*Food for thought dept:* This from my pal Kyle, finally out of the clink... and on Facebook): "If you get 20 years in prison for fantasizing about kids, and jacking off in your home to kiddy porn... and you get 20 years for going out and kidnapping and raping a little girl... well what's the molester gonna do?"

-->*Which is more important dept:* After the earthquake and radioactive tragedies in Japan, CNBC commentator Larry Kudlow reported: "The human toll here looks to be much worse than the economic one, and we can be grateful for that."

-->*Presidential Material Dept:* Presidential candidate Michele Bachmann wished Elvis Presley a happy birthday... on the 34th anniversary of his death. She made the remark during a campaign stop at a restaurant in South Carolina. Given the location, I expect a lot of patrons would have been aware of the error. Another interesting fact, because of the name, Bachmann, a lot of NY Jews think Michele is *one of us.* G-d forbid!

-->*Store this letter in the closet dept:* I got this form letter (asking for money of course) from what used to be called *The Gay Task Force.* It's an advocacy group for all the mainstream stuff like homos in the military or gay marriage. But it seems that people are ashamed to receive mail with "Gay" in the return address. So the group changed its name to "The Task Force." Whew! Now I don't have to be embarrassed in front of my mailman.

ZACHARY BROOKS

GUEST COLUMN

This Bike Is Not a Pipe Bomb

The hippies actually mattered. Now, it is my personal opinion that many of them—perhaps even most of them—participated in political causes primarily for their own gains. They wanted to get high, get laid, dodge the draft or simply fit-in with their generation. And it should be remembered that there have been few such perfectly-defined "generations" in history. It is certainly not the case for my own. Regardless of motivation, the hippies had numbers, and numbers are power. There has not been a draft since Vietnam, and while racism remains an issue, the political system that openly acted in direct opposition to the advancement of racial minorities has largely been dismantled.

There has not been a culturally based political movement in the United States since that can compare. Certainly not punk. One could argue for the relevance of the British punk movement, but it must be remembered that punk was significantly more popular in the UK. In an episode of irony so great it had to be British, the Rezillos sang the satirical "Top of the Pops" on the show Top of the Pops. The Clash were rock stars, and the musical political extremists—such as Crass on the left and Skrewdriver on the right—had enough human backing to actually create social disturbances. This was not the case in the good ol' USA. Nobody gave a shit about the Ramones, let alone Black Flag. The only hardcore band that mattered politically was Dead Kennedys and that was only because it solicited the backing of the ACLU—an actual political force—in its publicized legal battle against censorship. The left did not care about the music.

The hardcore/punk scene cannot, or at least should not, complain about its political irrelevance. It is undoubtedly one of the most exclusive, elitist movements in the nation. To this day, its constituents must follow a preconceived ideal of fashion, music and social mores. The early US punks—many of whom were more artists than anything—argued against these definitions, but undoubtedly by the early '80s, the forms of hardcore/punk had been set in stone. Sadly, there seems to be a misconception concerning the music's political importance. Anyone who saw the film American Hardcore sat through a slew of self-righteous old punks arguing against the obvious impotence of their movement. It's like the classic conundrum of the tree falling in the forest when no one is there to hear it: if the lyrics are provocative, but no one is listening, does it actually matter? Well, it matters to the people singing, and it matters to the insignificant number of people listening, but does it affect society or galvanize political change? Of course not.

I need to stress that this is not a critique of the music or its impact on the lives of thousands. There is a common pitfall in the assumption that art and politics are intrinsically linked. Music does not need to be political to be great; conversely, politicizing it cannot make it great (anyone who remembers Resist and Exist can attest to that). It does not even need to be political to be socially relevant. It does however need to be popular. Elvis Presley's hips made more of a social impact than an army of Ian MacKaye's could dream of. But that does not discount the artistic influence that Minor Threat had on subsequent bands or the cultural influence it had on many angst-ridden young people. Hardcore/punk has always been a respite for the socially retarded. Therein lies its relevance. The sloganeering is nothing but masturbation; the political rage is nothing but sexual frustration. The worth is in the individual, and many punks have certainly been inspired by its politics, but to describe a movement that, by strict definition is unpopular, as an "ungovernable force" (as those crazy Brits in Conflict would like us to believe) is a hilarious farce.

Hardcore/punk is not the only deluded movement. Let us examine the bicyclists. Henceforth, when I refer to "bicyclists" I am not describing the millions of people who enjoy riding for personal, civic, or political reasons. I am referring to the handful of bike messengers and the thousands of poseurs who have created a fashion movement in the guise of a political movement: $800 track bikes stripped down like '50s hot-rods, Chrome messenger bags, beards, funny hats, etc. I am sure I will be accused of stereotyping, but I am a social scientist and that is what we do. Like hardcore/punk, this is an elitist movement. The dress is regimented and the anti-car politics are severe in a nation that gave the world not only the automobile (in a mass-produced form), but a mythos surrounding it. "Oh oh oh oh Thunder Road," as The Boss says.

There is of course validity to the movement's political platform: pollution, America's dependence on foreign oil, blah blah blah. But I personally have not seen the bicyclist's contribution to political change. Mass protest is inherently inclusive. People of all types rallied for Civil Rights. Contrarily, Critical Mass is as futile as the dingbat pro life… err I mean animal rights… protesters screaming at children outside the circus. Disrupting commuters who have no idea why a small group of matching, bearded weirdos is fucking up traffic does not make people feel guilty about driving let alone create awareness of bicycle rights. The motivations are egocentric; it's no different than stage-diving or twirling around like an idiot at a Grateful Dead concert. It's a bike, not a pipe bomb, and riding one does not make you Rosa Parks.

As for the actual political change, we once again have the hippies to thank. They're old now, but promoting biking and improving bike safety allows them the opportunity to bask in their own self-righteousness while simultaneously making the streets safer for their precious, bastard children. While the bicyclists were drinking PBR and trying to figure out what personal effects could possibly justify the purchase of an over-sized satchel, they were lobbying for bike lanes and bicycle-related laws.

Now, before all you bicyclists get your rolled-up Dickies in a bunch, I am not some hate-filled curmudgeon. Like millions of citizens, I love biking and hope to see its popularity and accessibility continue to expand. My argument is simply that people need to view their social stances critically. My life has pretty much been ruined by punk. I love it way more than is reasonable and have dedicated far too much time to playing a style of music that essentially no one likes. I am fine with this. It's part of who I am as an individual. If you love your bicycle, go nuts. Ride in and out of traffic as inconsiderately as the worst drivers. Spend $80 on stubby handlebars. Deal coke out of your messenger bag. Do whatever makes you happy. Just don't get any delusions of grandeur.

JESSICA SILK

GUEST COLUMN

How to Stop Getting Called Out

Have you ever been called out? Are you a man who keeps getting called out by feminists who "take things too seriously" or "take themselves too seriously?" Are you a white feminist who has felt paralyzed when women of color questioned the inclusiveness of your efforts? Are you a white person who gets defensive when people of color bring up racism? Do you like to "mansplain" how things *really are* to women? Have you ever really said or thought a sentence starting with the words "But some of my best friends are…?" Do you ignore or mask your class privilege? Do you think people are "too PC" when they call out your language? Has a trans or non-gender-conforming person told you their preferred gender pronoun, but you can't seem to use it because you don't "get it" or you want to talk the way you're used to? Are you a hetero person who gets weirded out when your queer friend asks you to hang out in queer spaces? Did you, hypothetically, get called out for drawing a transphobic, racist, and generally shitty comic and don't understand why people complained because that's how things *really are* and it's other people who don't "get it?" You're just calling it like you see it, right?

These represent a wide range of examples, but most of us have been called out before—myself included. The trouble is that most people are uncomfortable with admitting to these kinds of faults in themselves, past or present. Anyone who is reading this and exemplifies these kinds of behaviors would sooner go on the defensive than actually shut up and listen, but I'm hoping you are curious or bored or on a long subway ride or on the toilet or you want to pick a fight with me or something and you'll humor me and read this.

I'm writing this because I keep noticing patterns in my loose community of punks where people keep sticking their foot in their mouth. It usually has to do with people being afraid to own or accept their privilege(s). I've seen people do some pretty impressive mental gymnastics in an attempt to bend reality to rationalize their ignorance versus just shutting up for a minute and learning a basic point from someone else's experience.

For example, I've heard dudes say they don't like female vocalists. When prompted, they'll explain something like, "No, I'm not sexist. It's just a taste preference" or "I don't like high pitched voices" or something equally idiotic. They try to justify it as a "preference" or about their impeccable ear and good taste instead of understanding the inherent misogyny behind disliking the sound of 50% of the population's singing voices. Not to mention that there is wide variation among both male and female vocals, including low-pitched women like Nico and high-pitched men like Geddy Lee. Another example is hearing men say things like "women aren't funny" or "female comedians aren't funny" without realizing the ways in which their dominant position in culture and society informs their opinion. I think what pisses me off so much—hearing these ideas come out of someone's mouth who's not a frat dude—is that it seems so antithetical to punk. It's about blindly accepting dominant culture and refusing to examine one's place in it.

I've also been in or witnessed various situations in which I've seen one privileged person called out by a person from an oppressed or marginalized group, and the privileged person automatically gets defensive and redirects the conversation by (a) claiming some kind of other marginalized position (that somehow gives them immunity from being a dick) or (b) pointing out that worse oppression exists out there in the world (i.e. women in some nameless "backwards" country have it way worse, which magically negates all forms of oppression in the US Hooray!). I can't stand this fucked up bullshit logic and all the work it requires to turn a conversation completely around just to ignore the person who spoke up so you can feel less like an asshole (while still being one).

I'm so tired of having my mind boggled by these kinds of situations that I've wanted to create some kind of tool…for tools (har, har). In all seriousness, though, many people—myself included—are at times blind to our own privileges. That is the whole thing about privilege—people who have it don't have to see it or deal with it because they are the dominant group and benefit from it. As a well-educated, white cis woman, there are times when I don't get something at first and I make mistakes or I need to put in extra work to see beyond my privileged positions. And often times it takes all kinds of fucking up and stumbling and learning and re-learning to see it and learn how to be less of an asshole. That is why it's important to learn from examples in which one's privilege is called out. That may be easier said than done, which is why I'm here to offer my own experience as an educator.

I'm a sexuality educator by trade. I get paid to talk about sex, which is pretty great. A lot of my work is skills-based, so we do things like teach kids an acronym that will serve as a mnemonic device (remember our friend Roy G. Biv for remembering the colors of the rainbow?) to use when confronting a difficult situation in their lives, like peer pressure or a partner pressuring them to have unprotected sex. And even with adults we have little tricks like "the four steps" to answering a challenging question. Often the first step is to breathe, and most people can do that!

Lately, I've been thinking about my experiences as an educator and how it's made me more patient and understanding with people outside of work—in my personal life and in my community. It's forced me to be more careful with my language and to be more aware of the ways in which my words may affect someone else's feelings or learning. It's forced me to accept and enjoy that I'm still learning instead of being too stubborn to listen to other people's points. So I decided to outline some steps to consider if/when you've been called out.

What to Do if You've Been Called Out

So, you've been called out. It doesn't feel good, but remember it feels worse to have to call someone out for alienating, offending, or disrespecting you. Ouch.

So now what? Here are some relatively simple steps to help you minimize harm, prevent being called out in the future, and maybe even become an ally.

Step #1: Breathe. Bite your tongue if you have to, and take a deep breath.

Step #2: Listen. Shut up and listen!

"But…"

No! Really…

"But, but…"

Listen. Listening is harder than it seems. Take the time to hear what the person is telling you. Experiment with letting them speak for 30 seconds, 60 seconds, two minutes, etc. without interrupting or trying to make a point or defend your actions. Hear them out. The best thing you can do as an ally is listen.

Step #3: Kill your intentions.

Don't cling on to your intentions. Unless you are a complete asshole, you didn't mean to hurt someone. And if you are a complete asshole, you're probably not reading this to figure out how not to be one. It doesn't matter what you meant, it matters what you said and how it made the person feel. You said something hurtful and it's your responsibility to deal with it. Getting wrapped up in "but what I meant…" or "but I didn't mean to" is not going to help right now. If it's all just a miscommunication then you can at least learn how to be a more effective and sensitive communicator.

Step #4: Assume their intentions are good.

Likewise, assume they are coming from a good place as well. Are you getting called out because someone is mean and trying to make your life difficult? Hell no. This is not their hobby and there's no conspiracy against you. They are calling you out because you made them uncomfortable and they have the courage to speak up. Remember, while it may not feel good to know you said something ignorant or disrespectful, it feels worse to be disrespected or alienated. Try to empathize. Have you ever had to call someone else out? What did it feel like to be on the other end?

Step #5: Ask.

Don't tuck your tail between your legs and leave. Seize the opportunity to make amends and learn. Be present. Make sure you are clear about why you were called out. How did it make them feel? What do they need from you? Is there an alternate thing you can say/do in the future to not offend? How can you advocate for them? Is there research you need to do on your own to educate yourself? Try asking questions, but note that they have the right to pass down educating you. It's not the responsibility of oppressed groups to teach the oppressor, so don't get pissed off if they don't want to teach you. It's your responsibility to learn and anything they teach you is out of generosity. Be thankful for their time and patience.

Step #6: Learn and reflect.

Even if you will never be on the same page or at the same place in your understanding, think about what you can learn from the experience. What can you do differently in the future? How may this conversation apply to other areas in your life? How can you be more aware of your privilege(s)? How can you advocate for others?

PHOTOCARD
Name of Holder: Mr.Mrs.Miss.Ms.
Layla Gibbon
Valid for use only by person shown with a ticket bearing the same number
BJO 5499

I am writing this a million miles from *MRR* HQ, in the street I grew up on in London, England. My first month off in three and a half years of running the magazine, and of course everything went wrong, our main computer died, there was sickness in the compound, police brutality on the streets, frequent earthquakes, so many outside factors working against us. But even though I have not seen this issue of the magazine as it's come together as I usually do, I know it's going to be amazing. I know what Mariam is capable of, and I am really excited to read the magazine that she put together in the face of total disaster and endless trials, I know that's where her strength lies. Coming up against insane odds and, you know, being triumphant. Working with Merm has been one of the funnest things about being coordinator of the magazine, she is so tough and smart and one of the most entertaining people to hang out with ever. A hard ass and a wise ass, a joker and a goof ball that you would be fool to underestimate… So yeah. I have been in Europe for a month, visiting with my mum, hanging out with various punks in various cities from Berlin to Bradford and for the first time in years not having the weight of the magazine on my shoulders.

I have been trying to leave MRR for nearly a year now, we have had some great applications and interviews, but no one has worked out yet in terms of replacing me. This job is intense and we need the right person to do it, someone who can handle the workload, who has energy and passion, who has a vision for the magazine in terms of producing the content, who is not a middle of the road indifferent slouch when it comes to declaring where they stand, and what they stand for. You must be consumed by music, by punk rock and hardcore, or garage, crust, KBD and most importantly be open minded and willing to work with a wide range of people who may have different ideas of what punk is or isn't. The magazine is for the punks by the punks, for those who care about the culture and meaning of DIY punk, not just trends and message board boredom. If you think you can handle running the day to day operations of this magazine, which include everything from accounting to interview layouts, and you will be trained on how things work, not just expected to understand everything instantly, if you can handle dealing with all different kinds of people, from landlords to drunk radio show DJs get in touch! We are looking for motivated people with ideas and you must be a legal US citizen with nothing that would mean you couldn't be on legal paperwork… so in short if you are an organized and inspired person who is ready for a new challenge and wants to live for free alongside over 40,000 green-taped records at the MRR compound email mrr@maximumrocknroll.com for an application ok?!

Writing this in my mother's home, in a deconstructed teenage bedroom with a suitcase full of junk in front of me and a Captain Beefheart picture disc to my left is a strange feeling. When I lived here, in Brentford, under the shadow of some brutalist 1960s towerblocks, council estate youth center existence it seemed there was never anything to do. Well, I formed bands with my friends when I was thirteen, skateboarded and wrote many zines and pen pal letters, but I felt alone and marooned in a part of London where people called me a goth, even though I mostly wore 1960s mod dresses, because I just didn't fit in with the kids I grew up around. I was considered a nerd and a freak, and punk was a lifeline to a community of similarly maladjusted nerds in various cities and towns and villages around the world. Those were different times. When we landed at the airport at the beginning of October, the first things we did was go straight to a show, in Hackney at this cool art space / show space / café called Power Lunches. We saw Weird Menace, Satellites of Love, and Roseanne Barr, unfortunately Woolf had to cancel due to a health problem, but I have heard amazing things about them. All girl London HC punk who are I think recording an LP this winter?! All of the people in the bands mentioned are in other bands, from La La Vasquez to Shitty Limits, that was one of the coolest things about being here right now, so many insanely good bands and so many of the same people doing them all… A totally different era! We were lucky as there were about five or six shows in ten days, which would have blown the mind of the teenage me. Seriously, I used to go see anything even the most bro'd out HC mosh or visiting weedy Midwestern sweater emo just to go to a show, and to have so many cool local bands playing shows was killer… London is on fire right now, no matter what people may have said to me to downplay the exciting nature of their scene. The Lowest Form cancelled their show, which was a huge bummer too, their 7" rules and I was really excited to see them play. We also planned out a trip to Berlin and Paris when Shitty Limits played their epic last show, true bad timing, we had planned it so we would make the Lowest Form and Woolf shows, both of whom cancelled. Fuckin' punks!

However, we were in London at the same time as Mexico City's own Inservibles so went to see them frantically, I think we went to all but two of their UK shows! One was at a squat very close to Islington, meaning that there was a large amount of time dedicated to quoting from the Islington Squatter documentary. The squat was insane, it was an abandoned office building from the '70s that had a garden on the roof and huge art pieces through out, and a dank room full of crusties and smoke in which the show happened. We missed most of the bands, as shows actually run on time in Europe it would seem, punks gotta catch the last train home etc etc, so we missed the Wankys and Holland's Nekromantiker (who were in the last issue of MRR courtesy of Mr Tony Gunnarsson), but Inservibles were insane. Totally blown out punk rock depravity, encapsulating the alienation of living in a city locked down by the drug war, if you have a chance to see them play ever you would be a chump to miss it. I remembered the 7"s having a sort of blown out garage sound to the mostly punk attack, but live that was not apparent at all, at any rate, whatever my hazy brain clouded memories of this band's recorded output are I am really excited to get back to San Francisco and listen to the new LP which you should get (on Shogun/La Vida Es Un Mus). We also got to hang out with Héctor of Otan fame, who was roadying for Inservibles and filled me in on the endless adventure that is punk rock in Barcelona and Madrid right now… Next year I will be there to witness it I hope!

The Means to an End fest was happening at the long-running punk social club and venue, the 1 in 12 in Bradford, and the line up included Shitty Limits, Inservibles, and Glam so we got a car together of punkers, including Ralph and Bryony, Collette and me and the elusive and mysterious SPK fan Hubbs, and headed up the M1 to the north of England. I learned to drive in California, on huge wide suburban streets in the town my grandparents lived in, and have never driven in London and thus also cannot drive stick. The car we rented was an automatic, and Ralph who was the designated driver had never driven one of those; it was funny seeing someone as flummoxed by an automatic as I would have been by a stick shift. I hadn't been at the 1 in 12 since I was a teenager, I can't remember what year it was, I used to go to most of the fests and saw everyone from Acme to the Month of Birthdays there. Ah, the '90s! It was rad being back, the space seemed way smaller, but just as cool as I remembered. Seeing a venue that was created to serve the punk community out of specific radical principles, one that still exists on the same terms was really inspiring. The food was a good and cheap as I remembered, as was the cider, though this time there were more Swedish crusties checking their facebooks on the communal computers… and I was definitely straightedge last time I was there.

As for the bands witnessed… We missed some as the epic drive meant we were hungry for Bradford curry brutality, which included a naan bread that was about the size of a human torso. Endless Grinning Skulls played, and blew me away. True veterans of the scene; I think ex members of Heresy and fuck, the singer is 51 and more hardcore and has more presence than a million MySpace crashercrusters combined. I guess they usually have a noisy almost Jap-core attack, but this show made me think of the power/impact of seeing Talk is Poison play. No joke. They were great live, I didn't really know what to expect plus I think this was the first UK show we were at where people actually danced?! Shitty Limits played their last Northern show, and were fucking incredible. I love their last 12", and seeing them play in SF ruled, but I guess seeing any band in an all ages space when everyone knows this is probably the last time they are gonna see them live is another matter entirely. So much energy and snot, like a teenager taking speed for the first time, it was impossible to keep still so no one did. Glam from Barcelona were also incendiary, their 7" is a constant on my turntable so having the chance to see them destroy it live was the best… Total destruccion… Paco said that the last slot at a fest here is the worst as everyone leaves to catch the last train back to Leeds, so the crowd seemed sorta thinned out when Inservibles played, but they managed to keep the frenzy going… All in all an incredible show. We were staying at our friend Charlotte's house in Sheffield, land of brutalist architecture, "Being Boiled" and a sick mod café with an all northern soul jukebox. You can stay at the 1 in 12 after fests, which I definitely did in my youth, but I was psyched to have the chance to hang out with Charlotte who is a crazy girl band music nerd like myself, and does an awesome girl skate zine called Skate or Cry... I think she is sold out of it, but check out her blog for more info on the past and present of Sheffield punk! gnarlotte.wordpress.com

The next stop on our epic journey was Paris, where we were met at the train station by a contingent of French punks, including Alex Ratcharge, Julien and Gael, who hustled us off to the longest running squatted venue in Paris where we got to see Bastard Noise. All you could hear was the drums and vocals, which made for an interesting aural experience. But it was really cool being in the space, seeing something happen in one of the storied Euro-squats that are the backbone of the DIY scene here. Also: why do bands who write brutal songs about environmental destruction do records with corporate car companies? Hmmm! Alex and Julien put together this amazing newspaper for punks who can read French called Freak Out! which you should check out. freakoutzine.tumblr.com covering everything from Pink Reason to Crimen De Estado, with lot of other writing mostly about music of the mutant punk rock persuasion, it reminded me of a less art fueled Nuts! in that it is a local newspaper for the punks that assumes the punks are interesting and consumed by weird notions and obsessions…

I know I personally find tour diaries and travel journals pretty dull, so I will leave you there, sorry if I put you to sleep!

Top five!

1: The Means to an End Fest tied with the Big Takeover show at the squat!

2: Going record shopping with Paco in various London locations, also hitting the flea markets of Berlin with similar intentions. So sick! So many things crossed off the want list. Also Paris punker hang outs!

3: Hanging out with Bryony and Alex Ratcharge and hopefully Tony Gunnarsson; the Euro MRR columnist contingent rules and are as much fun in person as they are in written form!

4: Watching tons of documentaries my mum taped off the BBC about reggae in London in the '70s and '80s, also the classic movie Babylon. About racism, oppression, police brutality, Brixton existences and good times in London in the early '80s. Although it's about reggae sound system clashes, it reminds me a bit of Quadrophenia in that it's a classic early '80s youth culture movie, it's as evocative. And it's criminal that it's not more known.

5: Going to see Cover Girl (new Trash Kit related band, Rachel Aggs=so dreamy) tonight, and going to Brighton tomorrow! We are the mod raucous.

Ha. Old columns are here: whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com and you can write me here: layla@maximumrocknroll.com

THE DICKTATOR

mariam bastani

Whew! What a crazy fucking month! We lost a month and a half of shit we need when the computer died a week and a half ago, I almost had to get a blood transfusion, my mom's third battle with Cancer is starting to show some hope (she is the ultimate badass survivor), there have been several earthquakes and I am trying not to drink… So, if there are any mistakes please send complaints to fyou@fyou.com. Seriously though… if I missed something, which we always do... Sorry dudes, I'm human…

So as you may know we are still looking for a coordinator… have had some really strong applicants, but have not yet found to right match. I know that Layla has talked about how hard it is to be coordinator, but that it is also rewarding… Well, you know what? It's rewarding, sure. Because you do get to hold a mag in your hand and say, "holy shit, I put this fucker out with the help of punks all over the world!" It s a similar feeling when you put out a record, a zine, a tape…But one of the other amazing things about this job is that at some point you will be insanely motivated and you will want to move on to other equally challenging and amazing things. *MRR* is great like that. This is a natural stepping-stone for doing awesome shit. And, yeah, I lived in a big city before this, but I came from a small shitty suburb (that I still love) that my family worked really hard to get to. And everything I know about punk is informed by that upbringing. Not everyone can be coordinator, it's true, but I firmly believe that there are more people out there that can than can't —no matter where you are from, if you think that you can kick ass at this job, you probably will.

All that said, I feel the need to mention one thing that you would indeed need to be able to deal with being a coordinator living at the compound… This place is haunted… Straight up. I can hear a chorus of "fuck you" right now, but I swear… Ask anyone who has lived here! Many ex coordinators have some pretty creepy stories about this place and I though I would give people one more reason not to apply. I am kidding… Honestly, believer or non-believer there has been some really weird shit that has happened here… I feel like there is a little bit of a back-story I should give you before I tell you some of the weird happenings… The MRR house used to be in a different place than it is now… The old neighborhood hood is now soccer mom village with high-end bakeries, a Whole Foods (first sign of "progress") and some pretty awful, expensive clothing shops… Anyway, *MRR* relocated to where it is now, a building, which is actually comprised of two apartments in one space that used to be a mechanics garage, then a theater/play house and then the current living space it is now. Tim Yohannan, the creator and head honcho of *MRR*, died April 3rd 1998 at the age of 52 in his bedroom located the front apartment of the current building. People live there now and apparently have not had any weird experiences. But there has been a history of "activity" on both sides of the compound.

When I first moved here, I was told that shortly after Tim passed away, one of the coordinators was sleeping in Tim's old room when he was awoken to Tim Yo standing over him gesticulating wildly and pointing at him. His mouth was open, screaming but no sound was coming out…

Several of the most recent ex coords told me that they have experienced some weird shit… Tim Yo was a chain smoker and once and a while, even now, there is phantom smoke smelled mostly in the review area which runs along the hall across from part of the record collection. One ex coord said that he was upstairs in the bedroom that is now mine sleeping with a few people in the same room, when he woke up to tapping on the window. He got up and looked around. Everyone else had remained asleep. He shrugged it off, but the second he laid his head back down the tapping resumed. This person still comes over all the time and still says he has eerie uncomfortable feelings of being watched… Another coord said that she had seen her bag open and close several times while living here. She also saw her bag move from the table on to the floor with a smooth and slow motion as if with an invisible hand… The same exact thing has happened while I have been here. People have told me that they get pretty sketched out by the hallway where the record collection is located. I can totally understand that, because it is narrow and dark, but numerous people have told me that in certain parts of the hall, they feel certain that they are being watched. To this day if you find a record pulled out of the collection in a certain way, you are supposed to play it just in case Tim has pulled it out because he wants to hear it…

The very first night Justin Briggs lived here, he was sitting at the main computer, which is in the kitchen, and he heard the faucet turn on full blast. The fixture is one that needs to be lifted to turn the water on… Startled, he looked over and watched as the fixture slowly went down, shutting off the water… Another time, Justin was sitting in the courtyard that overlooks the review area and saw a hooded figure in black make its way across the hall and disappear. He says he knew exactly whom he had seen… Tim Yo used to wear a black hoodie all the time that he wore zipped up and hood on. The most unnerving recent story that someone told me just last year was that they woke up while sleeping in Layla's bedroom to a figure standing in the doorway staring menacing at them for a solid thirty seconds.

This month Layla was outta town, meaning that the area upstairs of the compound was all mine. Her bedroom and mine are next to one another with a bathroom facing my doorway. The very first night she was gone, I was getting ready for bed when I heard shuffling in her room. I watch a ton of horror movies and of course I am thinking that this is perfect… It's night, I am in my underwear, alone and all the lights are off except for in the bathroom. I was thinking that I should probably puts some clothes on if I have to make a run for it, but I decide that if some maniac is gonna try to hack me to pieces I might as well look great while I fight this assailant. Anyway, I made the decision and thought, "alright, I'm fucking going in…" So what do I do? I call out, "Hello?" I slap myself on the forehead. Stupid… I flip a light on and since there is no perching fanged creature or a CHUD anywhere I get it together and think about where I thought I heard the sound coming from. I think it came near the closet, so I slowly begin to approach the closet. At this point I am hyper sensitive to any sound, any movement, it's like I am on acid or something. I reach the foot of the bed where there are a TV and VCR. Suddenly, I hear the whirring drone of the VCR start. Every hair follicle on my body is sending electric shocks. My eyes widen and I slowly turn my head downward where the VCR is, two inches from my body. Sure enough the fucker has turned on. I raise my eyebrows, take a deep breath and say out loud, in almost a sigh in some sort of resignation, "alright, alright…" I switch the VCR off, slowly tip toe backwards out of the room, flip off the light and close the door. No more going in there… A few nights later I am awakened by some quiet knocking on several spots on the other side of the wall near my bed, some extremely high some right next to me…coming from Layla's room. Several days later I am sitting at the main computer, editing as usual. It's getting late and the sun is going down, so I flip the lights on. After two hours, I am in a fevered state of editing and suddenly the lights, only in the area I am in, go out. I walk over to the switch plate thinking that there is some faulty wiring or eroding connection going on because one of the lights has been tricky lately. But, no… The lights are actually physically switched off.

Sure all of this shit freaked me out and yes, sometime I do indeed feel like I am being watched, but I figure if it's Tim Yo, I really don't have anything to worry about. Maybe I am crazy, but at that moment in an empty house with the lights now shut off, I felt the need to say out loud, "I know you are here. I think that's cool, but I don't want to see you. Ever. So if you think I am doing a good job or a bad job and this is what these signs are all about, either way Thanks… cuz I really need the encouragement right now."

A few days later I am upstairs again. I wake up out of a dead sleep very early in the morning. Did I hear something? I realize that I have to pee. So I get up and stumble into the bathroom. Only inky twilight guiding me when I flip on the light and in a sleepy haze I suddenly realize that the toilet seat is up. For a second I am shocked. There are two people who live upstairs, both of them are ladies and only one of them is in the house. I don't feel afraid, but in my curiosity I do proceed to put the toilet seat down, then up, then down, then… I leave the toilet seat up and start to laugh. When I stop laughing I can't help but call out to Tim Yo, "Now that… is funny."

Endnotes:

1- The Ilegal test press of their third record coming out soon on Lengua Armada sounds bad ass.

2- Shit is blowing up in Oakland. Shit is blowing up all over. I really hope you are keeping up on the information because it can't bring us together until we make the step to educate ourselves and get involved. By the time you read this MRR will have left our big bank for a local credit union. I hope you are motivated to do the same if you haven't already.

3- Does anyone else notice the some of the parallels between the new Condominium album Warm Home and the Slices Cruising record? Word on the street is that Slices is about to come out with a new LP. I am crazy stoked!

4- Thanks to Osa Atoe, Daniela and all the others involved with the POC Zine Project in NYC.

5- Thanks Alex Ratcharge for coming to visit. This is your house. See your ass in France.

Laters! mariam@maximumrocknroll.com

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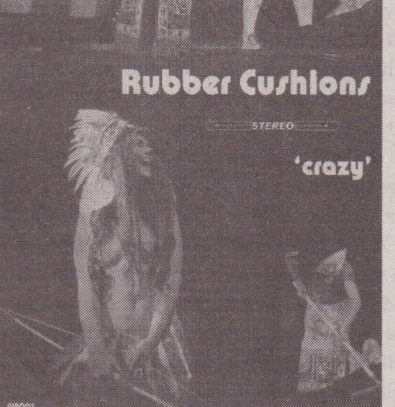

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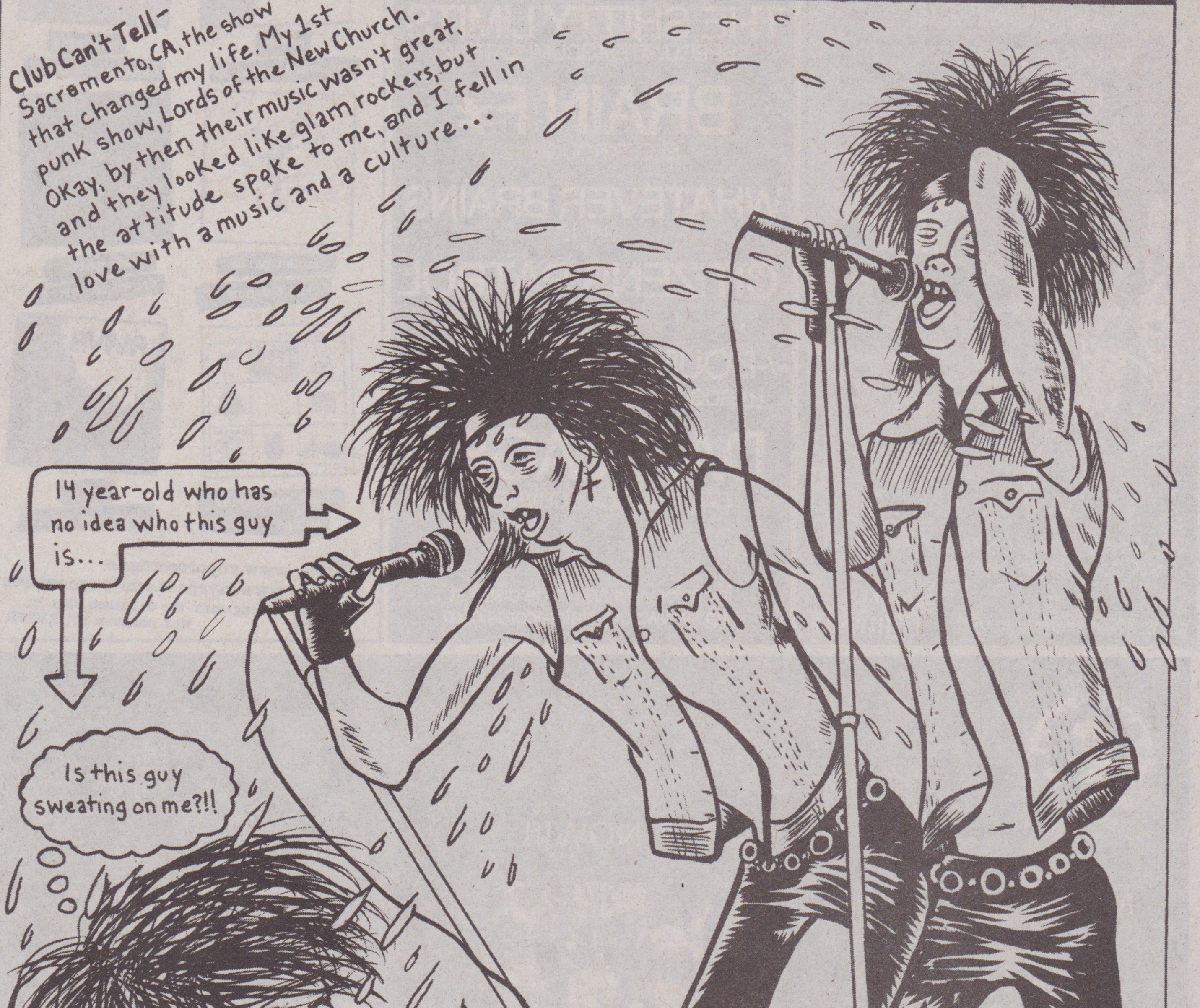
Club Can't Tell- Sacramento, CA, the show that changed my life. My 1st punk show, Lords of the New Church. Okay, by then their music wasn't great, and they looked like glam rockers, but the attitude spoke to me, and I fell in love with a music and a culture...
14 year-old who has no idea who this guy is...
Is this guy sweating on me?!!

As a bonus, I had my "first kiss" in front of the club at the end of the show in the form of a make-out session with a much older paisley punk guy I had met in "the pit."

by Gabrielle Gamboa, 2011

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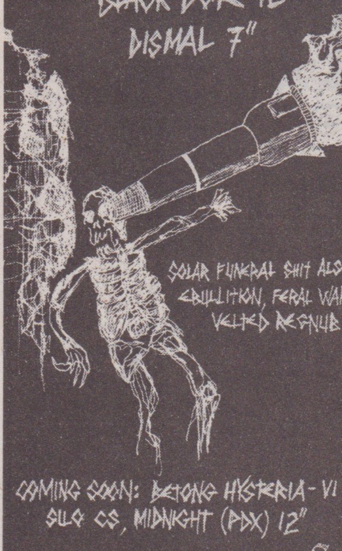

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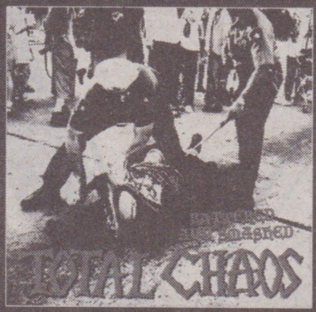

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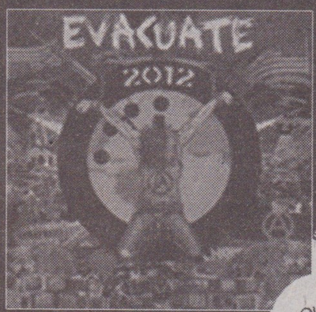

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NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILIED BY Dan Goetz and Mariam Bastani

"POST RACIAL" POLICE BRUTALITY AT OCCUPY OAKLAND

By Roberto Lovato from Colorlines

While President Obama was telling the small crowd at a $7500-a-plate fundraiser in San Francisco, "Change is possible," Pooda Miller was across the bay trying to get her plate back from the Oakland Police Department. "They came, pulled out rifles, shot us up with tear gas and took all our stuff," said Miller, at an afternoon rally condemning the violent evacuation of more than 170 peaceful, unarmed Occupy Oaklanders by 500 heavily-armed members of the Oakland Police Department and other local departments yesterday morning.

With a long metal police fence separating Miller and other members of Occupy Oakland from their confiscated items—tents, water, food, clothes, medicine, plates—and now possessed by the police, Miller grabbed a big blue and white bullhorn that looked like it was almost half of her four-foot, five-inch frame. "Give us our stuff back! It don't belong to you!" yelled Miller, who also expressed relief that her baby was not camped out with her that morning. The sound of Miller's ire shot across the protective masks of all of the officers standing at alert on the other side of the metal police fence, but her loudest, most acidic anger was saved for the baton-wielding officer who, like herself and other officers, was a young African-American woman.

"Who are you serving?" screamed Miller at the top of her high pitched voice, turned raspy from hours of denouncing. "You're being used. You're getting paid with our tax money to put down your own people! Why are you doing this to your own people?"

Miller's questions about the role of race in the policing of Occupy Oakland points to what is and will continue to be the larger question in Oakland and other US cities where former "minorities" are becoming majorities: What does it mean when those charged with defending elite interests against multi-racial and increasingly non-white activists are themselves multiracial and non-white? The ongoing protests, mayor recall, phone calls, emails and other pressure and pushback of Occupy Oakland are no longer aimed at cigar-smoking white men. They are aimed at a power structure in Oakland whose public face looks more like Miller and other non-white protesters.

Miller and others are calling for the recall of Jean Quan, who made history as Oakland's first Asian-American mayor and they are complaining about the use of excessive police violence authorized by Interim Chief Howard Jordan, an African American. Such conflicts between former minorities are becoming the norm in what more conservative commentators call the "post-racial" era ushered in by the election of Obama.

Quan and Jordan are in the throes of dealing with a police department plagued by officer-involved shootings and killings, corruption and other crimes—crimes that have forced a federal consent decree to reform the department, after officers were convicted of planting evidence and beating suspects in West Oakland. Taking her cue from the Obama campaign of 2008, Quan announced Jordan's appointment at a public safety forum titled "Creating Hope in the Community."

Many like Miller and other Occupy Oaklanders are having second thoughts about what feels like the application of affirmative action of policing and state violence. Others, like Ofelia Cuevas of the University of California's Center for New Racial Studies, see the workings of a not-so-21st-century pattern of policing and power.

"Having people of color policing people of color is not new," said Cuevas. "This was part of policing history in California from the beginning. In the 1940s, while the federal government was interning Japanese Americans in camps, officials in Los Angeles were starting to recruit black police officers as a way to decrease police brutality."

Cuevas noted that big city mayors like Quan or Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa are, by electoral and structural necessity, required to act like any of their predecessors, who headed up police forces that attacked, surveilled and even killed those perceived as a threat to the establishment. The Bay Area police's violent modern history stretches from OPD's assault on the Black Panther Party—which was founded just blocks from the center of Occupy Oakland, re-named Oscar Grant Plaza—to the killing of Grant, a young black man shot in the back by a transit police officer at a nearby train station.

"Being mayor is being pro-police. They perceive that it's their job to crush what they consider threats to the status quo," said Cuevas.

Regardless of who is Mayor or police chief, keeping the status quo is the last thing that Gaston Lau, a 21 year-old english major at University of California, Berkeley, sees as an option. "[Quan's] support for this amount of police brutality here is ridiculous," said Lau, who held a placard that said "Down, Down with Jean Quan."

"The future power struggles are not just going to be about fights between one race and another," said Lau. "They're mostly going to be about class, which is a big part about what the whole Occupy movement is about."

Lau is hopeful that the movement will inspire younger Asian Pacific Islanders to engage with the issues of the Occupy moment, but worries about the generational conflict such a political engagement entails. "Some older Chinese might see having one of our own as mayor as a source of pride, but we need to help them understand how Quan and police act against us."

Despite the internal and external challenges posed by multicultural powers putting down multicultural movements, Lau is, like his Occupy Oakland peers, undeterred. Clashes between Occupiers and Oakland police continued into last night as protesters tried to reclaim the park and police met them with tear gas. The movement has vowed to continue attempting to return to the space. "Whether or not the mayor is Asian," Lau said, "when she acts against the people, then we will respond as the people."

UPDATE:

A YouTube video is circulating of a protester who appears to have been struck in the face by a projectile fired by police, presumably one of many tear gas canisters police fired into the crowd during last night's march. Huffington Post reports that the man is an Iraq war vet named Scott Olson, 24. Olson is reportedly in critical care, with swelling in his brain. In the video, as others rush to Olson's aid, an officer fires what appears to be a flash-bang grenade into the crowd of people helping him.

Watch here:www.youtu.be/OZLyUK0t0vQ

KEVIN MAHONEY OF SIEGE DIES AT 46

Compiled by Dan Goetz from various sources

Kevin J. Mahoney, the former vocalist of Siege, passed away on Friday October 14th. The official cause of death has not been reported, but it is believed to have been sudden.

Mahoney was born on September 6th, 1965, and played saxophone in a ska band before joining Kurt Habelt, Henry McNamee and Rob Williams to complete the line-up of Siege. The band's first official show was at a "Battle of the Bands" in the spring of 1984 at their Weymouth, MA high school, where they were disqualified when McNamee smashed his bass onstage.

Although the band's members lived in and near Braintree, MA (near Boston and also home to Jerry's Kids and Gang Green), the band was never fully accepted by the XClaim-dominated Boston hardcore scene. They were definitely not lacking sonically, however, playing furious music at breakneck speed and pioneering a new style of brutal and nihilistic hardcore.

In 1984, Siege went into Radiobeat studios to record a demo with Lou Giordano. The tape made its way through the hardcore punk underground, and clearly made an impression on Pushead for one, who included Siege on his seminal 1985 compilation *Cleanse the Bacteria*. The band split up the same year, and the three songs on *Cleanse the Bacteria* were to be the only "official" release by the band, until Relapse and Deep Six reissued the demo on CD and vinyl in 1994 and 2006, respectively.

At the time of his passing, Kevin was working in the IT department at Children's Hospital Boston, where he had served in many capacities in his several years there. Prior to Children's, Kevin worked for many years — beginning in 1992 — in the IT department at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston.

BLOCKED! COURT GRANTS EMERGENCY STAY ON KEY PARTS OF ALABAMA LAW

By Julianne Hing from Colorlines.com

Two weeks after a federal judge largely upheld the nation's harshest anti-immigrant state law, an appeals court stepped in today [October 14th] and blocked two key provisions of Alabama's HB 56 while courts decide the constitutionality of the law.

Alabama, for now, will not be allowed to track the immigration statuses of its public school students and the state will not be allowed to enforce a provision of HB 56 that made it a state crime for people to be caught not carrying proof of their legal status on them.

The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals granted a civil rights coalition's request for an emergency stay on these two provisions while the courts decide the issue on the law's merits.

"We are pleased that the court blocked these damaging elements of the law," the coalition of civil rights groups that challenged HB 56 said in a statement. They said that other provisions of HB 56 are still being enforced, however, and that every day those are in effect they, "exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in Alabama."

"In just two weeks that the law has been in effect, families have been fleeing the state, children have been pulled out of schools, and businesses have been put in jeopardy."

Indeed, since the law has been in effect, Alabama schools have reported a marked drop in attendance as immigrant families have fled the state or kept their kids at home. The provision did not make it illegal for undocumented immigrant children to attend school – that right was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1982 – but the civil rights coalition argued that the provision had a "chilling" effect that discouraged kids from taking advantage of what was their constitutional right. The Department of Justice has also been looking into the issue.

While today's ruling marks a temporary victory for immigrants, some of HB 56's other harsh provisions are still in effect, including one inspired by Arizona's SB 1070 which mandates that law enforcement officers ask a person for proof of their legal status if they have "reasonable suspicion" to believe that person is in the person illegally. An appeal on Judge Blackburn's ruling is also being considered by the 11th Circuit.

BP CLEARS HURDLE TO DRILL IN GULF WHILE OIL SPILL LIABILITY LAWS REMAIN UNCHANGED

By Sam Stein from huffingtonpost.com

WASHINGTON D.C. –The Obama administration is set to allow BP to resume exploratory drilling in the Gulf of Mexico roughly a year-and-a-half after the company oversaw the largest offshore spill in history -- but without any changes to the laws that hold companies responsible for the economic damages that such spills cause.

Friday's announcement from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management that BP could proceed with plans to drill four exploratory wells roughly 200 miles from the Louisiana coast was a coda to a summer-long saga that forced the government to confront uncomfortable questions about offshore drilling and its economic and environmental impacts.

Government officials said Friday that BP had proved its "compliance with the heightened standards that all deepwater activities must meet." An Obama administration official noted that 43 oil drilling plans in the Gulf had already been approved and that this was the first approval specifically for BP. In each case, the official noted, the company had to pass environmental and safety tests including "the ability to demonstrate containment" of a spill.

In other words: BP had to show that there wouldn't be a repeat of the spill that lasted for three months and saw an estimated 4.9 million barrels let in to the Gulf of Mexico.

But on the off chance that the crisis was replayed, the same sort of liability laws would remain in place. Eighteen months after the

Deepwater Horizon rig exploded, oil companies are only subject to payment of $75 million on economic damages caused by a spill. For a time, there was a heavy push among Democrats in the Senate to raise the cap, as established under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, to $10 billion.

The Obama administration then pushed for the cap to be lifted in entirety. But they couldn't get oil-state Democrats on board. And Republicans, arguing that lifting the ban would effectively prohibit smaller oil drillers from operating offshore (because of the risk they'd be incurring), were unified in opposition. By the time the one-year anniversary of the spill rolled around, the legislation was essentially dead.

"We continue to support the removal of caps on liability for oil companies engaged in offshore drilling, and encourage Congress to take action on this important reform," White House spokesman Clark Stevens told the Huffington Post at the time.

And the legislation remains dead today. A top Senate Democratic aide confirmed that there had been no movement and no signs of such in the near or long term. The aide clarified that the law does allow affected parties to sue oil spillers for economic damages above $75 million. But you have to prove "gross negligence" in order to be successful.

The Obama administration remains supportive of raising the economic damages liability cap so that the issue doesn't end up having to be decided on legal definitions of negligence. But in the absence of congressional action, they have pushed for stronger compliance on the front end of drilling.

"We have put in place a broad number of safety standards that every plan and permit needs to meet," the administration official said. "This exploration plan met those standards."

THOMASSON WARNS OF "VERY DANGEROUS" QUEER STUDIES "INFECTION"

By Brian Tashman from Right Wing Watch.

Randy Thomasson of Save California joined Janet Mefferd on Friday to discuss the Queer Studies minor at Cal State Fullerton, and the anti-gay activist called the program an "oxymoron." According to Thomasson, a sincere academic discussion of the LGBT community would show that no one is born gay and that people can simply change their sexual orientation and become ex-gays, "but they are dishonest so they are indoctrinating college students to think that homosexuality, bisexuality and transexuality is good and natural, maybe even for them." He went on to warn that the minor could spread like an "infection" through academia and will be "training up an army to become intolerant activists" who will work to undermine and extinguish "free speech" and "religious freedom."

DIVERGENT VIEWPOINTS EMERGE ON CHILE'S STUDENT MOVEMENT

By David Pedigo from santiagotimes.cl.

Student protesters marched in the streets of Santiago Tuesday and Wednesday, continuing over five months of protest against Chile's class-based education system. The most publicized event in this week's demonstrations was the burning of a local bus, which drew heavy criticism from the government.

Government spokesperson Andrés Chadwick, denounced the demonstrations, calling them a failed initiative. "Today (Tuesday) this effort to shut down the country has not been achieved," he said. "It was a complete and total failure, and thank God the country is continuing on with its normal daily business activity."

This fits the narrative outlined several days ago by the Chilean NGO Educación 2020, who predicted that the student movement may become increasingly violent. Educación 2020 called for students to cease their protests and return to classes, as had the Chilean government.

Violence notwithstanding, the policies championed by the student movement have gained important national and international support.

Business leader Felipe Lamarca, president of Ripley S.A., a major Chilean retail and financial company, has called for tax reform. "The tax on businesses in Chile is far below the global average, and raising taxes would not affect our competitiveness," Lamarca said.

The results of a citizen-led national plebiscite were delivered to the government Tuesday morning. The plebiscite showed that 90 percent of respondents supported the students' demands. Several national polls have put citizen support of the students and their demands at 80 percent.

The students have also received strong international support. Wednesday, Kyung-wha Kang, the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, wrapped up a three-day visit in Chile and endorsed the student movement. "Their demands are within the minimum of international norms," she said of the students. Kang also took direct shots at the Piñera administration. "Education is not a commodity," she said, in reference to President Piñera's characterization last month of education as a consumer good. "It is a right of human beings and it should be progressively free, but there are many people who do not want to accept that in this government." Kang's visit comes on the heels of students' latest efforts to internationalize their movement.

Student leaders returned Wednesday morning from a four-day visit to Europe where they met with numerous international organizations. They also spoke to students of multiple nationalities in the Parisian Université Panthéon-Assas, where they were received with applause and shouts of support.

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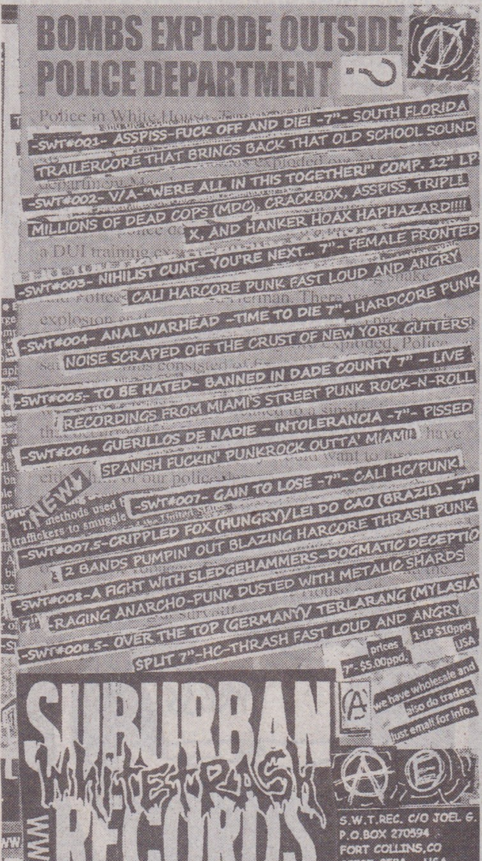

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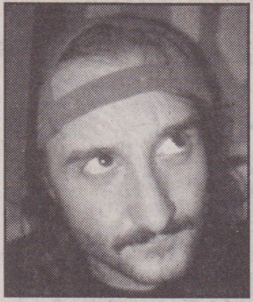
MRR asks YOU:

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month: what's your most bizarre workplace experience?
(asked at the last minute)



Mark, 26, New Brunswick NJ
I was working at a superintendant at a hotel, cleaning people's rooms, which often meant cleaning rich people's piss. One time when I first started, my boss was inspecting a room and was like "there's still a pubic hair in there."

Sonia, 26, Oakland
I was working at Planned Parenthood on Eddy St., and one day I came to work, and everyone looked half stressed out and half giggly. I asked my co-worker what was going on, and she said "someone took a crap in the elevator," and I said "someone got trapped in the elevator?" She restated herself, and then we all had to go back to the video camera to see it, and the lead clinician had to clean it out.

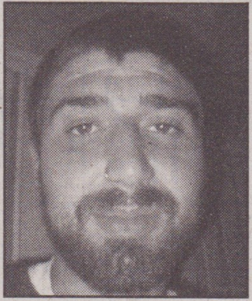
Jean, 30, San Francisco
I was working on a music festival with someone, and we were moving gear, and this person was highly irritable. He starts getting irritated, and I told him I was gonna drive away for a minute. He freaks out, jumps on top of the car as I was driving, and someone calls the cops, who tell me they would've called it in, but they didn't have a code for "Teen Wolf."

Louie, 26, Portland
I worked at a vegan restaurant that's known for being "sustainable," even though we have nuts shipped from all over the world. Someone came in and asked if we had anything that's 100% organic, and I had to go out of the kitchen as a cook just to talk to him. The fact that anyone would ask for something that's 100% organic versus what's actually good for a local economy and ecosystems, reeks of naivety.

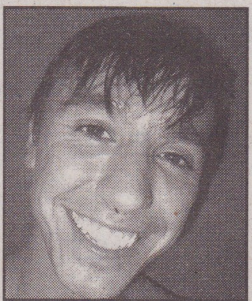
Violet, 25, Oakland
I was working at Buffalo Exchange, and this girl brought her boyfriend's pants in, and they were way too baggy and Jnco-like for what we take. I kept telling her that, and she didn't get it. Funny, my boss is out of touch with what's in fashion and was like "These are amazing, let's give her $13!"

Emily, 26, Oakland
One time, I was working as a cat groomer, and I was grooming a cat and vacuuming at the same time, and the cat jumped into a vat of paraffin wax. I didn't lose my job, but I had to clean the wax out of the longhaired cat for a very long time.

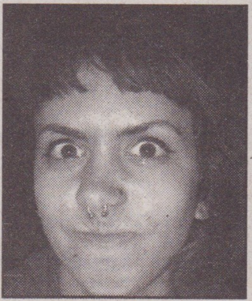
Heather, 29, Oakland
I used to be a custom framer at Michael's, and this older man came in, and noticed that I have a lot of scars on my hands, and he was like "oh, do you know this Eastern Eurpoean myth about scars?" I told him I didn't, and he said "when you die, you go to the hag in the sky and she eats your scars, and if you don't have any scars, she eats your eyes, and you go through the afterlife blind."



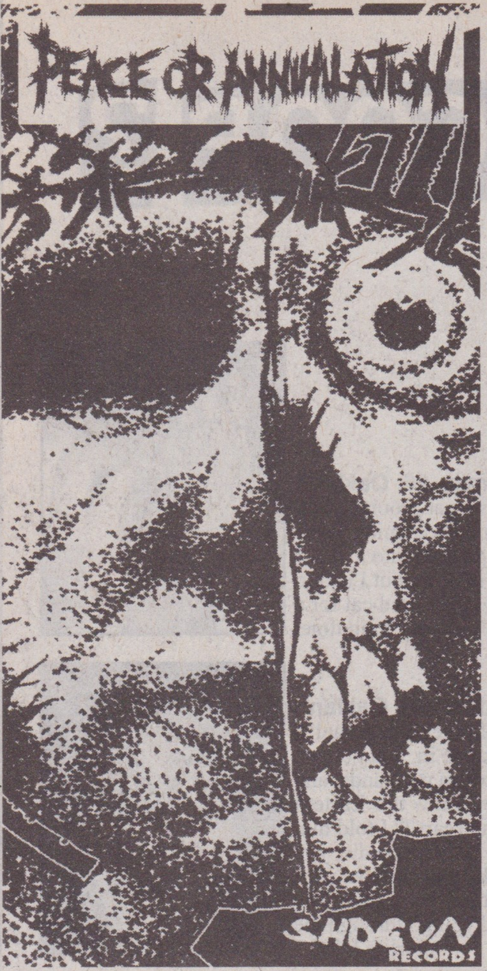
Gentry, 26, Oakland
I walked out of my job at Berkeley Bowl three weeks ago, because I was really put off by that company. They put across this image that they're for the community and bettering people's lives, but they didn't give their employees any discounts ever, and people have been arrested for dumpster diving.



Skylar, 23, Brooklyn
I was doing sex work, and had a john that used to be a general in the military and is now a warden for a state prison. He liked me to gnaw on the thick head of his dick, and one night we were in a hotel room, and he thought it would be a good idea to do that to me. Afterwards, I literally couldn't piss for two days, and I made him take me to the ER, and he had actually gnawed off a little piece of my uretheal opening, but he at least paid for the resulting medical bill.



Kimia, 20, Berkeley
There was this lady that would come into Old Navy at the time, and had shit her pants there before. One time I'm ringing her up, and it starts to reek. I thought maybe it was the chicken fat from the McDonald's above, but fifteen minutes later, I walk to the other side of the register, and see shit footprints leading to the back of the store.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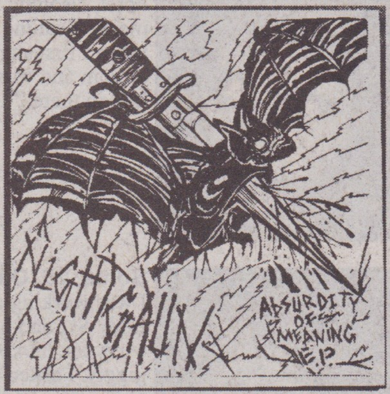
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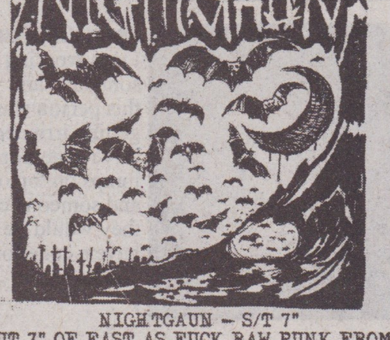

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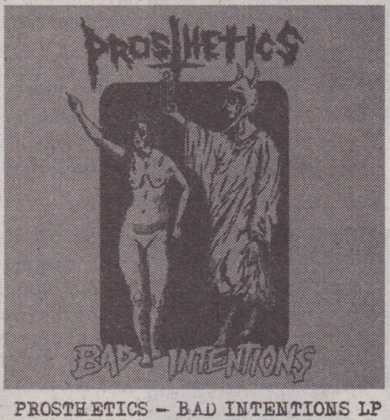
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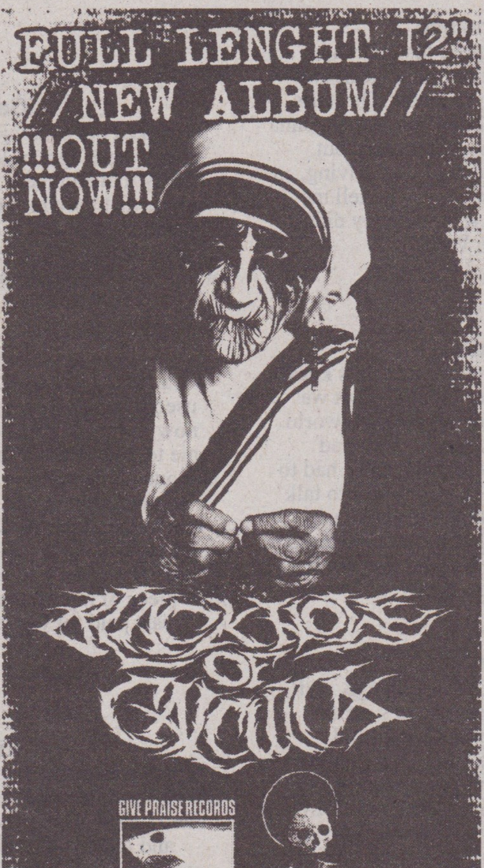
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Hailing from Indonesia, Peace or Annihilation has been active for years with more than a few releases under their belt. Luckily for us, there are no signs of stopping these guys from cranking out more of their raw punk vision. If you haven't already heard them, get to it! Here their bass player Ari gives us a quick look into punk in Indonesia and their philosophy behind punk.
Interview by Phil from Shogun records

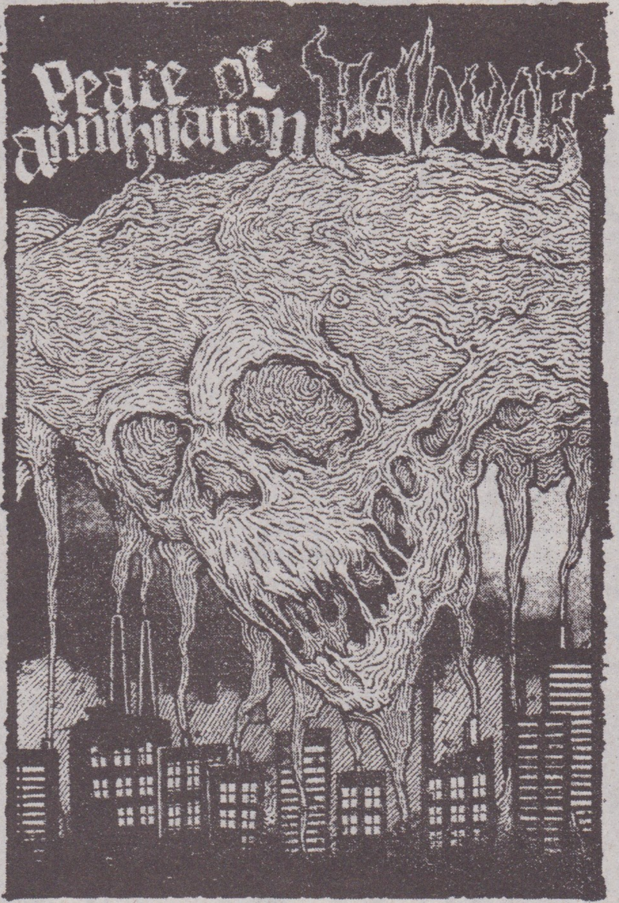
PEACE OR ANNIHILATION

MRR: Who is in the band? How old is everyone? What instrument do they play?
Hello friends, many thanx for the interview, and sorry it took a long time to answer this. Peace or Annihilation today is Buzzkoro on vocals, 32 years old, Toto on guitar, 34 years old, Ari on bass, 34 years old, link on drums, 30 years old.

MRR: How did you become involved with raw punk?
It was from the first time we got involved in the punk scene here, we think, because everything is so expensive here. We don't want to wait around long time to get stuff like expensive equipment or expensive recordings. You shouldn't have to be a good musician to play an instrument. DIY is not hard stuff, and what we like about the raw punk scene is the spirit to create everything an easier way. It's seemed everyone had the same idea, "Yes, you can come on do it and have fun…" So what we found is what we got. That is the little story about us.

MRR: I agree DIY punk makes sense when you need something simple and easy. What's the scene like in your neighborhood? Other bands? Radio shows? Places to play? Fanzines?

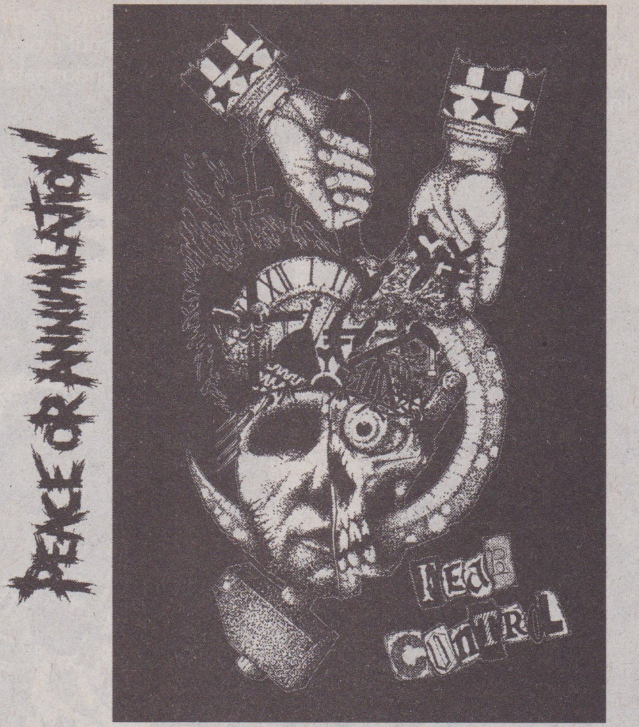
The HC/punk scene here is quite big. It's only about playing music and making zines today, but it's good. There are so many bands here, and so many tape or CD releases from bands that we can listen to; there isn't enough space on this page to mention them all. There is no DIY HC/punk radio here because it's so expensive; only rich people can do it. We can only make radio CD-Rs, then we spread them out by hand, but it's quite fun running a radio CD-R project that consists of interviews with bands and playing their music. Everyone can talk like a DJ, haha! There are a lot of places to play but usually many bands play one show. It's usually around ten to twenty bands in a small place that maybe enough to hold 300 people, and of course it lasts many hours. It's so expensive to rent the venues here that a lot of bands have to play to cover the cost, but it's fun. We meet many people, talk, hang out, and share info.



MRR: Is it only local bands that play those shows or can you tour all over Indonesia? What are your favorite places?
Yes, basically it's local band that are participating. We could have toured throughout Indonesia, but Indonesia is a vast archipelago nation... The only problem is time and money for sure. All like playing all these places, especially street events.

MRR: Do the punks in Indonesia fight against Muslim ideals like we in Europe fight against Christian ideals? What's the deal with sexism and homophobia in Indonesia for instance? Are there many girls at shows, playing the music?
Not yet. It's very rare to have a female band here, there are some, but not a lot.

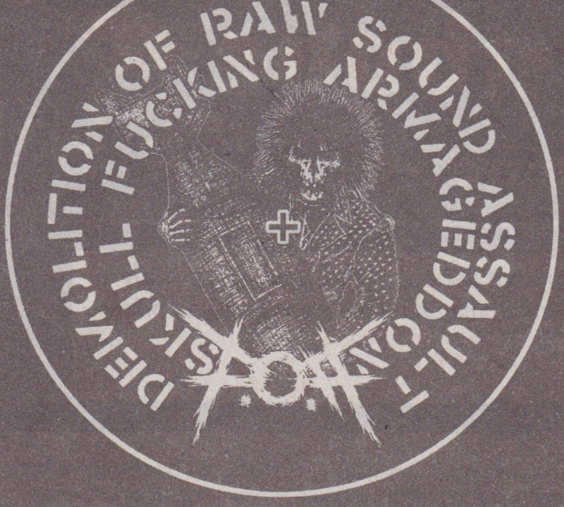
MRR: What's the Peace or Annihilation process of writing? Collective? Individual?
Sometimes collective and sometimes individual then later on we discuss it.



MRR: You guys write fast anyway. You don't need three months to get a new song, right? Your new LP was written and recorded in about eight months. Where did you record?
Yeah! That's why we really love DIY raw punk—no one needs to wait long to make it happen. The lyrics just deal with what's happening and going wrong in the world reflecting our point of view. We recorded in the small studio that our friend Danny runs, it's pretty lacking in equipment. It is impossible to have a better recording, there are so many leaks in the mics that we used, so...here comes what we call some raw sound. But with the help of computer technology our jobs became easier and little bit faster. All of those factor are why we can record quickly, but once again it depends on our mood, haha!

MRR: Hey! I love the way you sound. Don't change a bit! Your discography is already pretty solid, can you give us the details?
Alright, we began with our first demo tape called *Re-born & Distort,* which contains five songs, and then we started to make a full-length album in CD-R format called *Dis-nightmare Still Continues* (self release), and almost one year later *Horrific Disturbing Vision Of War* came out on tape and was also self released. *Demolition Of Skull Fucking Armageddon* limited edition single on CD-R came out with axe form, which is our self release too, *Hardcore Mayhem Vol. 1* released on Smyt records is a five-way split CD with Dokuga, Esporrro, Discrusher, and KxDx Sistema. Phil from Shogun records re-released *Demolition Of Skull Fucking Armageddon* on 7", we had a song on a compilation on Crucificados records called *Make Music Not War,* and some label from Malaysia called Black Seed records re-released our second album *Horrific Disturbing Vision Of War* on a pro CD. Last year we did a split 7" with Deportation (Belgium), split tape with our local friends Hellowar released on Disarmament records out of Malaysia, and we did a four-way split 12" with Besthoven, Warvictims, and Kruel that was released by Bombs Away and Crucificados records. The new tribute to Disclose compilations was done by Black Seed records. And we hope in September that our third album *Fear Control* will be out under Shogun records.

MRR: Who is the mysterious artist of your awesome artwork?
It's our vocalist Buzzkoro, who always draws or does art for the band. Yeah, we know he's good! We don't know why he


DEMOLITION OF RAW SOUND ASSAULT
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P.O.A

wants to be so mysterious, haha! Maybe he doesn't want to be someone who has a book full of orders from drawings? Another mysterious guy in hardcore…close to Sugi and Pushead in my book. He needs more exposure. His artwork for the new LP is amazing, don't you think? You know where the *Fear Control* theme comes from? Wow! Sugi and Pushead. Yeeaah! Expose his work... yeah! We really agree that next time he *must* put his name on his artwork, haha! All right the *Fear Control* theme comes from our point of view about hatred, competition, money, work, ideology, power and everything else that has always haunted people in their way of living. The act of terror in this day will build the future of mankind based on fear.

MRR: One of you guys lived in the USA for a while. How was it? A totally different lifestyle?
Actually our drummer Andras continues his study in the US. He will be back but we don't know when. Link, our new drummer, is replacing him for a while, because we don't want to bother Andras while he's studying. Actually, he completely took a rest for a while from Peace or Annihilation, but we will play again if he comes back to Indonesia.

MRR: How many shows have you played? Did you play any foreign countries?
From 2004? Wow, it's quite a lot we think! There are times that we play every week here, but today we do not play very often because everyone in the band has to work. There is no time for us to play in foreign countries, but we have plans to tour to Malaysia and Singapore. We hope there is time for us to get days off from our work.

MRR: I must say I know people all over the world in Belgium, Australia, or Japan, that would like to see you guys live. Hey people! Time to have a trip to Indonesia! The place looks great!
Yeah! Of course come here, we can give you a place to crash so you don't need to rent a hotel room. And thank you very much Phil for spreading our music on a wider scale.

P.O.A

VOCALS : KILLER 47

DRUMS : SARMIING

BASS-VOCALS : NGEJOANTAH

GUITARS : GENOCIDE GERMS

death from above

- d-beat inferno -

Death from Above hailing from Goiania, Brazil has been turning out D-beat, R@w punk since early 2006. Here guitarist Mingau talks to us about the band and punk in his city. This interview was originally done for Karasu Killer *zine in Japanese.*
Interviewed by Rafael Karasu. Photos: Eder Sales Cave

MRR: Tell us a little about the band's history, the discography, the first shows. And also, what's the meaning of the band's name?

The band began in the beginning of 2006. I had become bored, because the two other bands that I was playing in had broken up by then (Neurose Urbana in 2004 and Chaotix in the end of 2005). I wanted to start another band, but this time I wanted to play D-beat! I chose the name Death From Above because of Discard's Death From Above 7" EP. Besides being one influence in our sound they were the first band to use the Discharge logo declaring thus their total passion to the Discharge. Then I began to think about this new project. So, I called the Thiago that was playing in the Sociofobia, to play bass and called the Ratão (drummer of the Neurose Urbana) to give us a hand as drummer to compose some songs. Since there were no others drummer to play D-beat here in the city he accepted. We did about six songs, played in a gig and he left the band. As a result, we called Hassan who had previously been in Sociofobia and was the guitarist of Desastre. With this new line up we did the demo Lost in the Insane War with him on drums, it was cool because I had already played with him before in the Chaotix. Shortly afterwards he too left the band, but during this time we opened our eyes and realized that our friend Slake had been playing in the bands WCM and a new band Asas Da Vingança. We realized that he had an interesting style and that perhaps he could play with us. We had a few practices, but his drumming didn't really fit our D-beat direction. I showed him what we were looking for and eventually he was catching the beat and perfecting his own style.

We then began to work on new songs and play shows. 2007 and 2008 was very good for us, we played a lot — about two shows monthly. It fueled our sound and helped the band become more cohesive. We also use the "non-stop show" strategy like in the live The Nightmare Continues of Discharge, so it helped us a lot. About recordings, what I can say is that we are a band without much luck! After we recorded the demo Lost in the Insane War in the end of 2006, we recorded three songs in 2007 for a split 7" EP and a tribute to Disclose album. The split never came out because another band, Kandiru from Minneapolis broke up and the tribute to Disclose simply did not include us on the CD. Then in 2008 we recorded the CD digipack Death Comes but it was released in 2009. Also in 2008 we played in Gama-city at the Besthoven gig for the DVD recording. Our set was recorded, mixed by Frango from Galinha Preta, but it is yet to be released. Our CD Death Comes was to be released by the Speed State records from Japan, but in the process they stopped writing, so I gave up and decided to release in the local label TBONTB (Two Beers or Not Two Beers) and my label Mingau'a Productions. That was much better because we still had good distribution in 2009. We recorded two more songs for another split 7" with Dead Section from Portland who was coming to tour in Brazil. We were to join them on the tour, but in the process Dead Section canceled their whole Brazilian tour. They split up and they give up doing the split. During that time we had already sent our finished recording to them, which they were going to press.

At the end of 2009 we did our second tour in São Paulo, Death Comes. We did about six or seven shows and it was a good but very stressful tour. We returned home and Thiago quit the band. We then invited Danny, ex-Desastre, to play bass. We recorded two more songs in the end of 2010 for another attempted split EP with War/System from England. That record was never release because their vocalist quit. Unfortunately, he was my contact for this split. So, we lost heart and gave up. Currently, we have decided to use one song for a four-way split EP, which is still in progress. In the beginning of 2011 we recorded four songs for our debut 4 Trax E.P., that will be released on 7" and as a tape (with two bonus tracks) by Bombs Away records, coming soon. Besides that we recorded a cover of "War's No Fairytale" by Discharge for the Discharge Brazilian tribute in CD, which is in progress. And finally we recorded three songs last May for "4-Way for Destruction" Vol. 2 that will be out next August.

So really our discography is:
2006 Lost in the Insane War demo (7 songs plus Discharge cover)
2007 unreleased recording (3 songs, included Disclose cover)
2008-2009 Death Comes CD digipack (12 songs)
2009 unreleased recording (2 songs)
2010 unreleased recording yet (2 songs)
2011 4 Trax E.P. 7" EP (4 songs) coming in soon!
2011 4-Way for Destruction Vol. 2 (3 songs) coming in soon!

MRR: What themes do you cover in your lyrics? How's the writing process?
I write the lyrics. I think what sets us apart from many D-beat bands is that I try not to only write lyrics about war even though it's still a very relevant subject. I try to write about human condition with acid criticism and of the intrinsic solitary character of being human. I don't have a particular process to compose lyrics, it is constantly happening, informed and inspired day-by-day — external and internal. All of these things are influences and become inspiration for the lyrics.

MRR: What are your biggest influences?
When I thought about starting the band I didn't have a formula for the type of sound that we were going to play, but I certainly didn't want to do a sound clone of another band. I tried to look at root influences: Discharge singles, Antisect demos, old Disclose, Discard, MG15, Unruled, the Inconoclast, Diatribe, Final Warning, Fader War, Disaster, Underage, old Crow, U.B.R., Olho Seco, and more. With the bass player change, our sound has changed. We are trying to do a more prepared sound, but still in the same D-beat vibe.

MRR: Do all the band members have a day job, or do you live off your music? What's the hardest thing about having a band in Brazil?
I have some odd jobs — I have a small silk-screen business, I'm a DJ and play at local parties, but also cultural events, concerts and parties. This is where I get my money. Slake is working at my old job in a bindery, a kind of graphic place but smaller. Danny is fucking unemployed, we hope he finds a job soon to help pay practice studio for the band! (laughter) Now, the greatest difficulty for a Brazilian band is lack of support to produce and spread their music. Also, there is a lack of spaces for punk shows. Another thing is very little support from the scene with people still insisting on not paying for shows, always asking to enter for free and also not supporting bands by buying records or merch. All of this would greatly help bands to continue producing albums and merchandise. These are all difficulties, but you have to understand that we are not in it for money or fame. We just want to be able to continue making our noise.

MRR: And the current state of Brazilian underground, what's good and what's bad? What's the band's opinion on the punk/hardcore scene in Goiania ?
I can't exactly say that it's good, but things are a little easier today than ten years ago — at least here in Goiania. The scene is small but has been quite active in recent years. There has been some unity among us, creating good cooperation among the punks, anarcho, hardcore, thrashers, etc. This is one development and important factor that I consider very good for our scene. There have been shows every week here in Goiania. Many new bands have started and many people to help produce have appeared as well. Currently we have organized the following events: Noise for Heroes, Music for Zeros that I do, in which we had brought Darge from Japan to play. There has also been Punks Not Profits, Underground Forces, Thrashcore Fest, among other events more sporadically but with some regularity.

MRR: In what other projects the band members were and are involved?
So, I've had many projects in the past. I've played in the Neurose Urbana (1993-2004), Chaotix (2003-2005), Refuse (1994-1996)...Disastre (1996), a band which me and Wilton began along with Fofão, Ratao. But this line up lasted short time. These were the bands. I had played in Besthoven already while playing with Neurose Urbana, neither had a bassist and were sharing the same drummer. I played bass in Besthoven, Fofão played bass in the Neurose Urbana in 1996, but we never played a gig. I played in the band Lixo, when they moved to Goiania, the band included the Marcelo Holanda aka Kamikazi drummer in Nailbiter. Slake besides being the vocalist In WCM, played in Asas Da Vingança. Danny played in the Desastre for a long time, but he also play with me in the Chaotix and other projects. He also plays guitar in ASAS Da Vingança.

MRR: What the band members listen to nowadays?
I listen to many different styles of music, but two bands that I'm a fanatic of and never stop to listening to are Discharge and the Cure. I like a lot of old and classic punk, hardcore, post punk, goth, rock, etc., of different styles. Danny listens to similar music, but I don't know what he has been into recently. Slake likes tons of hardcore, crust, punk and rap. I don't know which bands he is listening to right now but I know they are fast! (laughter)

MRR: Since 2003 there's a new wave of punk/hardcore bands coming around in Brazil. How do you see this revitalization? Which bands/artists do you consider prominent?
Yes, some good and great stuff has been appearing in last few years, which is very encouraging. We needed good bands in Brazil again. The best bands are the ones paving their own way without out shit talking or competition. Many friendly bands have appeared that are eager to form partnerships, which is so valuable to our current scene. Whipstriker (Rio de Janeiro), Unfit Scum (Sao Paulo), Nuclear Frost (SP), Social Chaos (SP), Terror Revolucionario (DF), Chaca (Rio Grande do Sul), Murro No Olho (DF), Gritos De Alerta (Rio Grande do Sul), Subterror (DF), Violator (DF) and more... they are so many good bands but these are the ones I can remember right now.

MRR: What would you guys be doing if it weren't for punk/hardcore in your lives?
Man, sincerely I do not know… I've been a punk since I was young, when I was forming a personality, so it's hard to imagine anything else. I always liked music, so perhaps I might have found myself becoming a professional DJ. I remember a time before becoming punk that I liked the DJing world, observing the guys spinning vinyl at parties etc. — it made such an impression on me that it never left my head. Perhaps I would have this way? I think the same thing for Danny and Slake… at least, I think so. Danny has been a punk since he was thirteen and today I don't think he has ever thought of changing that. Slake has also been a punk since he was a young kid, so I can hardly see him changing either. Maybe it will all change if they win the lottery?! (laughter)

MRR: More and more we talk about corruption, violence and unemployment in Brazil, what do you see for the country's future?
These scenarios have been systematically occurring in Brazil for decades. There has been no significant attitude change or paradigm shift on the part of local or national government to change this depressing situation in which Brazil finds itself. A new promise of change, mainly in healthcare, education, anti-violence, corruption, and unemployment, accompanies every election — these basic needs for life to proceed. But what happens? — More scandals and no improvements. People are tired of being cheated. The lack of confidence in the government is growing and it's only going to worsen. As for me, I don't believe in government. They don't have my best interest in mind; I know it's there to fuck me.

MRR: How would you like Brazil to be?
Financial like the Swiss. In regard to culture, literature, cinema and music as in England, Germany, Czech Rep., Spain. As in Italy in the culinary world, but as Brazil as well — there is lots of good food here. Well, this is just a dream; there is no perfection in a nightmare world.

MRR: What do you know about Japan? What do you admire about this country?
Well, Japan has one of the most active punk scenes in the world. All great bands, record labels, places for shows, and the most beautiful look! (laughter) I do not know much about Japanese popular culture. I know that it can be extremely conservative due to an ancient culture. Generally, people are very organized and focused on work. Someone told me it would be nearly impossible to survive in Japan without a job because everything is very expensive. I know that women in anime are much more attractive than those in real life (laughter) and I know Godzilla, Spectremen, Goku and the rest of the Saiyans live out there too! More over I know that Japan has the best musical equipment in the world. Well, what I admire most is their spirit of survival in the face of adversities and problems. They have survived two nuclear attacks, and this recent giant tsunami that hit the country… If this had happened in Brazil, chaos and despair would be far greater than the disaster itself.

MRR: Many Brazilian bands want to play in Japan, what's the possibility of Death From Above touring there?
It would be a dream playing in Japan. But I think it's unlikely we will play there one day, because we don't have money for airplane tickets. But if someone is interested in taking our band to play there, it would be more than perfect. We'd like to play there more than anywhere else.

MRR: What do you know about the Japanese hardcore scene? What bands do you like, and what impresses you about them?
I have been a fanatic of the Japanese hardcore punk scene for a long time, thanks to people like Kawakami, Takeshi and Ryuji Asada that have sent me a lot stuff when we started to have contact in 1994. I like old and classic bands like Death Side, Crow, Kuro, Gism, CDFL, Execute, Gauze, Zouo, Confuse, SDS… Also the crust of the '90s bands like Disclose, Framtid, Abraham Cross, Age, Battle Of Disarm, Contrast Atittude, Disprove, Beyond Description, Slang, Gouka, Ability, Final Bloodbath, Deadlock, Reality Crisis, Gloom… Newer bands like Darge, System Fucker, D-Clone, Disgust, Isterismo. What impresses me most is the brutal Japanese sound and some of the special techniques used, which are always very well executed. The recordings are high quality making each band sound great in each of their styles.

MRR: What message do you have for Japanese readers and Death From Above fans here in Japan?
Thanks for the opportunity and we hope to play in Japan someday. Keep the brutal Japanese sound alive and continue to produce good stuff. And if by chance you have any interest in releasing our stuff, get in touch with us. We'd love to have our stuff spreading throughout Japan. This is noise, not music!

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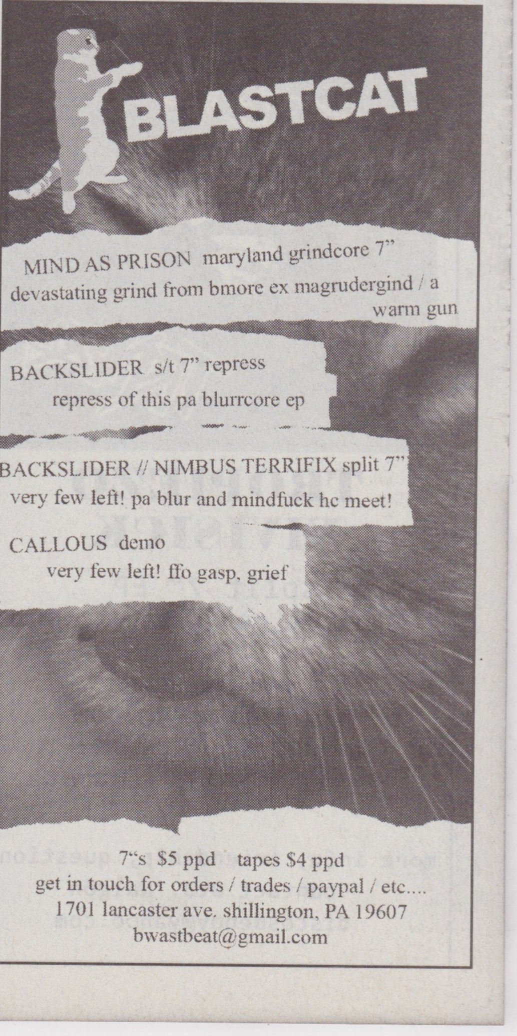

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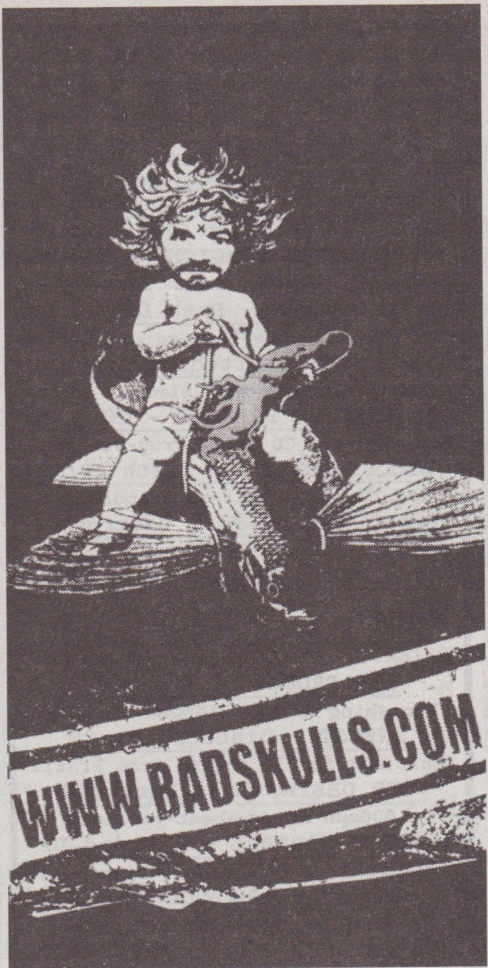

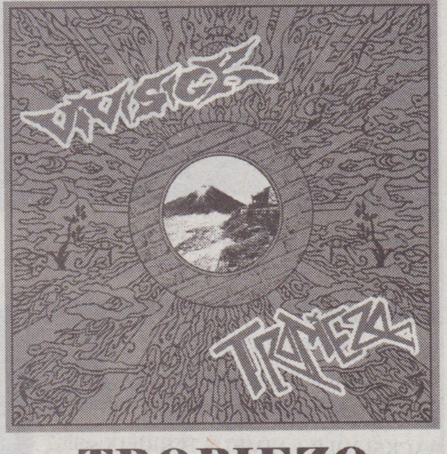

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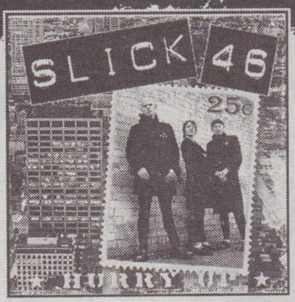

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KATORGA WORKS

I was first made aware of Adam and Colman's record label Katorga Works through reading the I Could Die Tomorrow blog, where they both review records frequently. Getting to know their interests musically through their writing, many took notice when they began releasing records themselves. Existing a very short time, Katorga Works have released some exceptional recordings covering a fairly wide swath of genres and are staying quite active. While touring through New York in May 2011 and playing at the Katorga Works headquarters at 538 Johnson Avenue in Brooklyn, Joe Lachut and I were able to talk to Colman and Adam about the label and their future plans (while Will from Rational Animals cooled out silently in the corner).

Interview by John Fahy and Joe Lachut, Intro by John Fahy

MRR: OK, so I guess the label starts with the blog in a way? Is that accurate or no?

Colman: I guess not really? Adam, you've always said that you'd like to keep a separation between the blog and the label because it would be like hyper-narcissism to blog about the label.

MRR: Inspiration for the releases—did that come from what you were writing about, maybe?

Adam: I don't know if the inspiration came from that. I guess I personally realized I was completely useless and talentless, and thought I could focus my talents elsewhere when it came to the production of records. And Colman wasn't the first person I was planning on doing a label with. I was going to do it with my old roommate Nick—Infest Nick, for all you Pittsburgh people—but that fell through. Colman and I moved in together and both realized that we wanted to do that. I don't know if it really stems from the blog itself. Colman wasn't an original member of the blog or anything like that.

Colman: If it stems from anything, I think it comes mostly from Adam and I being roommates several years ago. We had similar tastes, which led me to ask if I could write occasional reviews for the blog. I had been putting out records for a while sporadically for my own bands.

MRR: Was that elsewhere or was that here in New York?

Colman: Yeah, we started living here (Stolen Sleeves) about three years ago.

MRR: So how did the first release come about?

Adam: We just decided that we wanted to do a label together. The first record we put out was the Wankys/Lotus Fucker split. Dan from Lotus Fucker is one of my best friends and I talked to him about it. He shook my hand a year before the record came out, saying, "the band's going to do this Wankys split, let's do it together." He called me nine months later and said "we're starting this now." But I think what made us decide to do the label was that Colman and I were very, very into Merchandise. Colman actually was like, "hey, Merchandise is putting out these tapes, why don't they put out an LP? Merchandise should be an LP band." Then we talked to Carson about it and he seemed into the idea. That's the most tangible reason we started the label.

MRR: So how long ago was the first release?

Colman: It's about a year ago.

Adam: A little less, I think.

MRR: It seems like the label has really jettisoned from there, stayed pretty prolific since.

Adam: Well, that was a dream first release, the split. You wouldn't think that a split 7" in 2010 would be a very lucrative release, but we did three pressings of it. The first pressing sold out and the second pressing sold out immediately and we gained all of these distro contacts, etc. Dan held our hand throughout the whole process and it really helped a lot to do that with him.

MRR: So you do a lot with distros? It wasn't just straight mailorder?

Adam: That record, because the audience of that record was mostly Japanese and European, we did like forty mailorders total for the first 800 records and the rest was just sending mass amounts to Japan and central Europe.

Colman: That record is sort of an anomaly. You asked about the blog affiliations—no one who runs in this internet circle that Adam frequents was interested in it. It was almost exclusively record collectors, people into raw punk and stuff.

Adam: Nobody downloaded it. It's got like 400 downloads. We've pressed 1,100 at this point, whereas with the other records the download rate is like three times as much as the sales. I've always found that interesting.

MRR: With the different styles of music that you guys have released, do certain distros only want to take certain bands? Like, whoever wants raw punk may not want Merchandise. Have you ever run into any of that?

Adam: A few noise not music kids have actually taken the Merchandise LP.

Colman: We lied to them and said it was raw punk. (laughter)

Adam: No, we didn't bother messaging all of these Japanese record stores saying like, "hey, you want to check out Dads?" That wasn't something that crossed our minds.

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LOTUS FUCKER

Colman: There are some loyal purchasers. There's sort of a mailorder group that widely gets everything, I don't really know why because we are kind of eclectic in terms of the different sounds.

Adam: We have certain labels and distros, like Grave Mistake and Video Disease and other places like that, that are very supportive.

MRR: I think it's something the blog really lends itself to. It seems like the things you review on the blog would assist with that because your reviews give a wide spectrum of what it is you're into. If people are behind a lot of what you're listening to they may take notice when you actually go to the trouble of putting out something yourself, the idea that you're really behind a release to be involved with it. So it seems like the blog would really help with that aspect, making people take extra notice when you're not just talking about a release, but actually getting behind it.

You were saying before the interview that when you work with Deranged on split releases, you don't really do any big wholesale stuff, like Ebullition or whatever. Tell me about that.

Adam: We use Ebullition for other records, but with Deranged for example, because Gord is doing a Canadian operation, he can't afford to do mailorder and we can. For the Hoax record, which was our first split release with Deranged, we didn't do any Ebullition wholesale, so most of our records were mailorder, which is, you know, cha-ching. (Laughs) Sorry.

MRR: So is that how the majority of releases are? You'd sell mostly through mailorder?

Colman: No, we definitely do more with distros. The way the Deranged thing worked out was that Gord has a lot of relationships because he's been doing it forever. He could do more wholesale. He suggested that he'd do Ebullition and some wholesale and we'd do mailorder.

Adam: I mean you make more money doing mailorder, selling records individually, but I'd much prefer to sell wholesale. It's easier. I don't have to go to the post office as much. But it's also cooler to have our records in all of these labels and distros that we respect.

Colman: Also, Newbury Comics in the suburbs.

Adam: Love the suburbs.

Colman: I'm kind of serious about that because anybody, no matter what their taste or background, can randomly bump into something, which seems non-elitist and cool to me.

MRR: So the second release was the Merchandise LP?

Adam: Correct, split with Drugged Conscience.

MRR: And how did that record fair? That was a pretty abrupt change for the band.

Adam: I think some people may have been disappointed with it because they were expecting a more rock version of Merchandise. But even after giving the band their copies, we sold our half, which was four hundred copies, in about a month. That was pretty great.

MRR: Was that repressed?

Adam: There were 1,000 copies pressed, so that hasn't been a priority.

Colman: That record was also not just bought by people who get vinyl from us regularly. I think a lot of people that were into indie pop and shit were getting it or downloading it.

MRR: What is the ratio for downloads off of the blog versus people actually buying the record?

Adam: I would say two to four times as many downloads. The Merchandise LP has been downloaded something like 5,000 times and we only pressed 1,000 total. Except for the Wankys/ Lotus Fucker split, as we mentioned, it's usually like that.

MRR: Do either of you have certain tasks that you two carry out, like one does mailorder or one does internet correspondence?

Colman: This is something that I have perpetual anxiety about. Adam is sort of the social brain; he does most of the social aspects of the label like communicate with bands. He begrudgingly does most of the mailorder because I work, so it's harder for me to be around.

Adam: I'm just a full-time cat mother, so I don't have really any obligations outside of that.

Colman: Adam does most of the legwork...you can stop me if I'm saying something inaccurate.

Adam: No, I do. (laughs)

Colman: I will talk with pressing plants and do some photo stuff.

Adam: He actually handles a lot of the art direction because I have no idea what I'm doing with that.

Colman: It works because I'm socially afraid...and you may be too, Adam, but it works.

Adam: I hide it. (laughter)

MRR: So what was the third release?

Adam: It actually came out with the fourth release as well, which is Colman's band, Natural Law, their debut 7". We put out all three records together. The Dads 7" makes sense because the two members of Merchandise are in Dads with our friend Cameron.

MRR: Did that lend itself to people buying all three at the same time?

Adam: Yeah, I think so. I'm not trying to brag about how quickly things sell out, but Merchandise was like a month, Natural Law was a week and a half. Dads, we probably still have about 80 left. (laughter) Actually, that guy Dan Melchior, I think he's some garage rock hero, he bought just a Dads 7" from us and then I messed up his order twice. Sorry, Dan!

MRR: So what came after Natural Law?

Colman: Do you want to talk about the snafu?

Adam: Well, by catalog, the Whirl *Distressor* EP was supposed to be our fifth release. That didn't happen for various reasons that I don't know if I want to get into because I don't want to start shit talking, even though it's really just a rational appraisal.

Colman: They don't read *MRR*. (laughs)

Adam: (laughs) So we ended up not doing that. I guess we had some releases planned that still haven't come out, like the Weed Hounds LP, which is actually one of the first records we agreed to do. It's been almost two years since we agreed to do it and they're just recording it now. The Rational Animals LP is another one, which I don't mean to embarrass the guitarist, who is in the room with us right now, but it's been a headache! (laughter). We ended up putting out another Merchandise record and a ( ) record which is David Vassalotti of Merchandise's solo project. That was a 12" single and Merchandise was a 7" single. Both pretty dance-y, which we were both into.

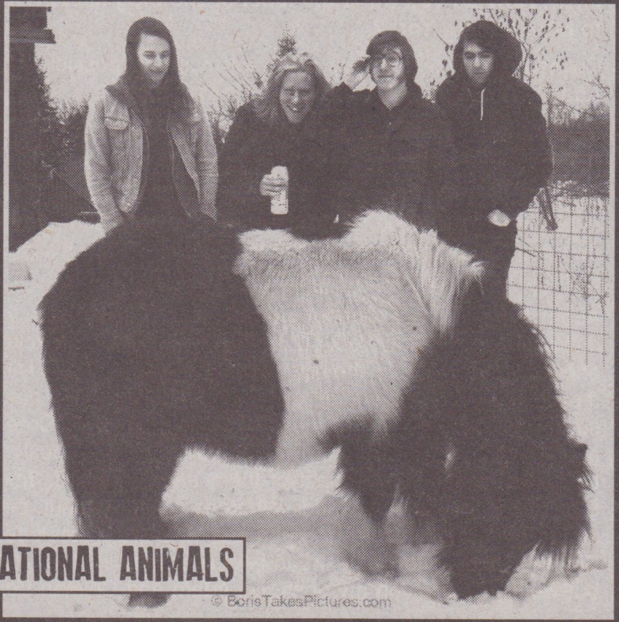
MRR: So do you think there's a specific sound expected from the label or the blog? Like people who like fast hardcore will keep an eye on it?

Colman: If I had to guess, I think it would be people that lean toward the arty side of things. Which sometimes, I don't like, because I like some pretty ignorant hardcore.

Adam: The blog started with like four vegan straight edge dudes who listened to hardcore, but then we realized we also listened to funk and go-go and shoegaze and shit like that. I think our fan base is mostly punk. We're selling records through punk means so I think that keeps things from deviating too far from the norm.

MRR: Probably getting some kids into things they wouldn't ordinarily listen to?

Adam: That's kind of our hope. I'm not trying to change the landscape of what punks listen to, but that's cool if people listen to other shit.



RATIONAL ANIMALS

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WEED HOUNDS

MRR: So what is coming up now for the label?

Adam: We're really busy actually. We just put out a Hoax 7" with Deranged, which was awesome—great dudes. Next, pretty much next week, we'll have a 7" single by Colman's other band, Creem. The drummer of Natural Law is in that along with Colman and the guitarist of Nomos. So that's our next immediate release but we've realized we're trying to have four or five records released by August. So that's going to be insane. We have a Wiccans LP, this band from Denton, Texas, the Rational Animals LP, which is very good.

Colman: Not just saying that because Will's right here.

Adam:(laughs) And, uh, a Weed Hounds LP, finally being recorded, shockingly. Then we're doing a 7" for Avon Ladies. Those are like the most immediate releases we have coming up that have to be done. At least three of the bands are touring this summer so they really need to be done (laughs).

Colman: We're also doing the Natural Law LP when that's finished. We are most likely releasing second LPs from Merchandise, Rational Animals, and Wiccans.

MRR: Do you know everyone in the bands you release, like even a band like Avon Ladies out in Arizona?

Adam: Avon Ladies is an exception to that. A friend of ours told them to do the record with us and they agreed. We've gotten to know Jes through the process, though. Super human being. Other than that, we know everyone we've worked with to varying degrees. For example, Wiccans we met on tour and are great dudes. Then there's Rational Animals, who we know really well, unfortunately (laughs), as Will never leaves my house, and we're tight with the Florida people. So we like to work with people we know, because the one time we didn't—Whirl—it didn't work out so well.

MRR: What kind of deal do you usually work out with a band? Do you ever pay for recording or just give them a percentage of the pressing?

Colman: Our normal thing to do is give twenty percent of the pressing to the band.

Adam: We don't even ask them, we just kind of give them twenty percent. We don't pay for recording normally. I think if a band needed it and we had the money, we would help out with it, but no one's really asked us to.

Colman: Don't get any ideas. (looks at Will from Rational Animals)

Adam: (laughs) Yeah, you guys can keep recording for free with your friend's lawyer dad. But yeah, we just kind of do twenty percent and promise to ship the records out.

MRR: Is there any specific direction or different kinds of things you would like to do with the label in the future?

Colman: Well, one idea we had from the start was to do like, half and half, punk and hardcore and other eclectic kind of stuff. But I think it's kind of skewed now, right?

Adam: It's definitely more punk and hardcore coming out now.

Colman: See, I thought it was the other way.

Adam: I think up to this point there've been more non-punk releases, I mean I don't want to boil it down to punk versus non-punk. I think Merchandise is the punkest band we've ever done, other than the Wankys (laughs). I wouldn't question their punk points.

MRR: What was it like when you two toured together with Natural Law and people got to put a face to the label and blog?

Colman: Every city: "Are you Adam Whites?"(laughter)

Adam: (laughs) Well, we did get asked, mostly by younger people, "dude, are you the guy that does I Could Die Tomorrow? Somebody went up to Jay from Natural Law and was like, "hey, are you Colman from I Could Die Tomorrow?" and he was like, "no, he's over there," and the kid was like, "cool!" but then didn't go up to him at all because he already put all of his courage into that question. It was cute. But yeah, we just went around with the Katorga Works distro, which actually wasn't that big at the time, and tried to sell records. It was nice to meet people.

MRR: So do you have a favorite release, each of you?

Colman: Hoax was really special for me because I've known the guitarist of that band since high school and the other members for a really long time, so I was really excited to do that. That's a non-musical kind of assessment but I was really happy to do that record and I think it's a really pretty looking kind of release. Jaybo, who did the cover for *Hidden World*, did the art and I just think it's a great looking and sounding release.

Adam: Unsurprisingly, I'm going to have to go with the Merchandise LP. It's one of my favorite records period. When Carson pulled a fast one on us and sent us this music that was completely different from what they'd been doing before, I was like, "what the fuck, Carson?" But then I realized I liked it so much more than the old stuff, and I was, like, "my god, this is incredible music." I'm so glad to be a part of it and to help get Carson and Dave out there. I am in love with that record and I listen to it every day and have for over a year now…pretty dark shit. (laughter)

MRR: I imagine you guys are doing okay with money so far.

Adam: I spend too much of the label's money on cat food and imported Cheerwine.

Colman: I bought this Slobs shirt with label money last night. (laughs)

Adam: Great band. No, all of our releases sell well and for us to try and deny that would be silly.

Colman: We do have to put in money still, it doesn't pay for itself entirely.

Adam: We're doing large pressings.

Colman: Which is intentional.

Adam: You saw me last night almost participate in a record trade that existed in pure collector scumbag territory, but we're trying to put out records, not commodities. We do all black vinyl and we try not to distinguish between pressings. We hope large pressings coupled with uniformity help eliminate the eBay commodification of records. It's not that we don't find rare, colored vinyl, first pressings, etc., to be cool, but for our records we try not to contribute to that.

WANKYS

MRR: I guess one thing that seems somewhat unique to me about the label is that, maybe through the blog mainly, the label is very internet-visible.

Colman: There is kind of a built-in mechanism there that makes some things easier. I don't think Adam or I have figured out the relationship between blog readers and sales, because a lot of people that read it don't buy records.

MRR: I always figured that you would do a lot more mailorder through the blog than sales through distros, etc.

Adam: Oh no, it's quite the opposite. A huge majority of our records are sold through distros and stores. Also, we try to keep the blog separate from the label, as it's not I Could Die Tomorrow records. There are people who post on I Could Die Tomorrow who have no affiliation to the label. I don't want to downplay it either, though. It does help people download the record and is a big help with publicity. But we do try to keep a separation with the blog. There are fellow writers who are doing completely different things. Catherine does a label called Puzzle Pieces. She's doing her thing that's completely different from Katorga Works. She just put out a Bad Banana 7" that's pretty sick, check it out. Then some O.G. writers from back in the day, Trey and Flynn, they're part of this Some Ideas Collective in Braddock, Pennsylvania They're doing a shit ton of stuff (Hounds of Hate, most notably) and are going to put their own stuff out. They're all separate entities from the label with separate interests.

MRR: How do you think the label or the blog lends itself to punk in New York?

Colman: One thing we try to do as much as possible—(to Adam) don't drink out of that, I have a cold sore.

MRR: That's staying in. (laughter)

Colman: That's okay. As much as possible, certainly on the blog, Adam and I both reviewed Crazy Spirit stuff and we review all of the Toxic State releases. They are consistently awesome and pretty unique in terms of punk music. It's great stuff. So we carry it all in the distro.

Adam: We like to help out our friends' bands, carry stuff in the distro, just to get New York out there. I've been really excited about the music here in the last two or three years. When I first moved here, I was bummed out on it. I was like, "this place sucks." But now there're all these kids, like the Nomos/Creem and Crazy Spirit/Perdition crowds and they're all seriously in ten different bands and most of them are very good. Toxic State is my favorite local label. Whereas we spread out, they do mostly just New York shit. John and Mike are great dudes. But, there's definitely a desire to be a presence in New York, but we're not like, "oh my gosh, it's Adam and Colman from

Katorga Works!" I actually don't think most people even know or care that we do it, but it's not going to stop us from having a distro at shows or booking shows and helping out New York bands. I feel like Toxic State and Katorga Works are the two New York punk labels that are very active and trying to be very local. I feel like it seems inevitable that we will do a record together at some point. I like living in New York and I like trying to get New York out there.

Colman: The landscape of punk and hardcore—and I could be naive in saying this—I think has changed a lot in New York in the last five years, even. Mike, who plays in Creem with me, is from New York and he and I were talking last week. When he was growing up it was mostly older people in hardcore bands. He thought New York was like an old guy hardcore scene because he knew Kill Your Idols and stuff like that in the late '90s. Even five years ago, there weren't as many bands. I don't really have a sense of all of the different labels putting out young punk stuff in New York, but it feels good to be a part of that.

MRR: I was curious to see what you thought of the *New York Rules* comp tape.

Adam: I'm personally not a fan of the comp. I felt like it was aesthetic and packaging over actual content. Outside of New York, I think it's gotten a really good reception and a lot of people have been way into it, but within New York I've heard mixed things. At the same time, I heard they're doing a vinyl version, like a volume two that many more bands are going to be on. That sounds like it's got the potential to be better.

MRR: It seemed like it was a good mix, though, of New York stuff.

Adam: That's true. You got Nomos, the Men, Dawn of Humans, Nude Beach...

MRR: Byrds of Paradise.

Adam: Our relationship with them is complicated. Their drummer brought the *New York Post* to our building, who ran this article called "Mosh Pit City" about how "hardcore's coming back in New York." We asked the writer not to mention us for fear of eviction and he threatened to publish our address. One of the guys from Byrds of Paradise brought them to our house and it was this big thing. I don't think anyone's really mad about it anymore and I think it's just a thing with him, not the band. In the end, they got a full-on spread in the *New York Post*.

Colman: With a glowing picture of you.

Adam: (laughs) Yeah, where I'm clearly telling the cameraman, "don't take a photo of me." The real reason I'm bitter is the caption beneath: "these Bushwick club kids come to the Johnson Street house for all the cool times." So now I'm immortalized as a Bushwick club kid. My father saw that. (laughter)

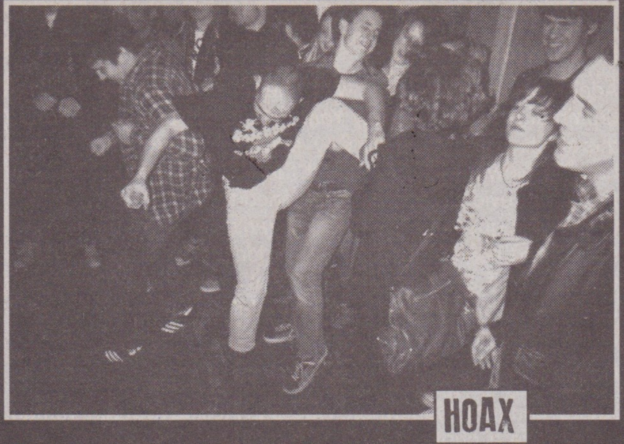
MRR: Earlier you were saying it's difficult to cover all of the New York scene in any fashion.

Adam: Yeah, when we say we want to have an affect on and showcase New York, obviously we're not super in touch with every scene around here. I find out about new ones all the time. Musically, you may take a band like Perdition and think that they're extremely different from the Men, but now those scenes are very much in touch with one another. People from both of those scene go to shows and we're very much a part of that.

MRR: Do you think booking shows at Stolen Sleeves helps to keep those kinds of bands and shows linked here?

Colman: In that Stolen Sleeves is universally reviled in New

ACK
AG
MERCHANDISE



York.

Adam: Yeah, Stolen Sleeves, for those that don't know, is our house in 538 Johnson (a DIY mainstay of NYC) that we do shows at. We can't win. (laughs) Everyone dislikes us. It's the one dry space other than ABC No Rio, but at least people have a backyard to drink in there. To one crowd, we're like the p.c. fascist straight edge kids and to another we're like the jock hardcore kids, which is also funny because I can't even do a pull-up. Also, neither Colman nor I are straight edge.

Colman: Those may be old stereotypes.

Adam: They may be old stereotypes, but they will never go away. I do try to book different shows here, sometimes to the chagrin of our roommates. Certain bands have been banned from our house. Rational Animals, for example, is not allowed to play here anymore. (laughter) Hank Wood and the Hammerheads, I believe, is not allowed to play here, etc. I just try to book different shows here.

MRR: How does living here affect the label or blog? Have any bands come through and played that you started relationships with?

Adam: I feel like at this point I'm the one who primarily books shows here, so I know what I'm getting and I hate booking shows. But I do it because a lot of my friends ask me to and I can't turn down a friend's touring band. I usually like the band too, so that makes it harder. Like for instance when you asked me for a show, I was like, "damn it, John!" (laughter) Luckily I got to kill two birds with one stone because Slobs needed a show too, killing a lot of my anxiety issues. When other people were booking here more frequently I think there was a better chance of us having that happen. We had old roommates who booked a lot of shows and they would book almost anyone who asked, which was pretty cool. We're more selective because we don't have the energy they had.

Colman: That being said, I feel like we do way more shows than 201, which is down the hall and they do huge shows.

Adam: The bigger shows. People like going there.

Colman: Yeah, you can drink.

MRR: This is 203, right?

Adam: This is 203, this is the Stolen Sleeves Collective. This is the no-fun house.

Colman: We do less shows than five years ago but we still do tons. Reliably, every month, we do two shows.

Adam: I keep telling myself I'm going to stop doing shows and it's just not happening. Maybe people will stop hating us eventually.

Colman: People come out.

Adam: People come out and they just hang out in the hallway, the hallway punks, and I mean I'm friends with these kids. I'm not hating on them because they're hallway punks, it's just what they are.

Colman: It's just their nature.

Adam: You can't escape nature.

Colman: (laughs) Jesus, what are we getting into?

MRR: Do you get a lot of people hitting you up with stuff to harness the attention from the blog?

Adam: Oh god, yes.

Colman: We have an unmanageable amount of emails of people asking, "will you post this?" So we started asking for hard copies of everything.

Adam: Because half of them aren't tangible, they're just like, "hey, I recorded this with my keytar in my basement."

Colman: Then we get really weird shit, like agents will send promo packets and shit.

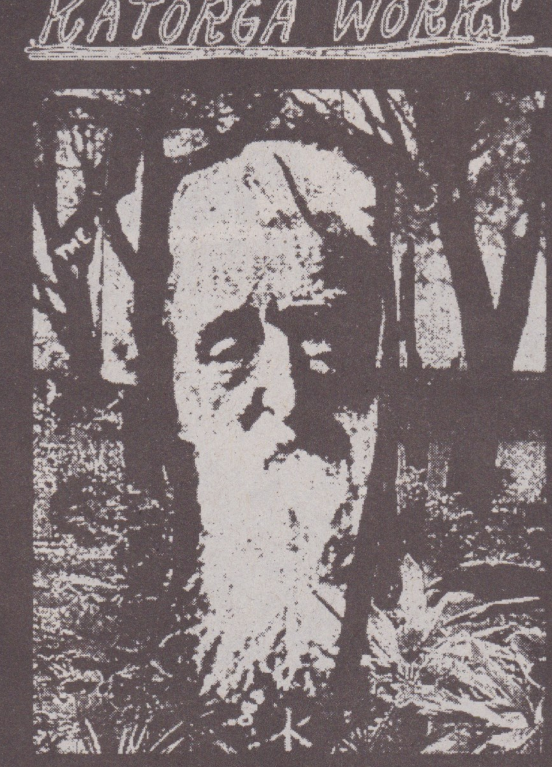
Adam: Ozzy Osborne's agent sent us something about his new single, Aimee Mann's publicist too. Occasionally we get stuff on that level and laugh and show all of our friends and then delete.

Colman: Shows, not so much. Adam and I know people and they know people and they recommend. It still essentially operates like punk before the internet.

Adam: If I post about it on the blog and make a Facebook event and don't do any physical flyering, people aren't going to come to the show. You gotta do physical flyering and use word of mouth. That stuff is still mandatory and we still operate within those confines. I think a lot of people think we rely on the internet more than we do, which is not to say that I don't spend a good amount of my day on the internet—ugh (laughter). But it's not a means to an end.

MRR: Any final words?

Adam: Just thanks a lot for interviewing us and foolishly thinking we have something interesting to say. M'asallama!



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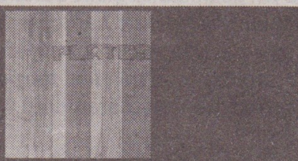

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DESCARADOS

For about 25 years, I've had amazing opportunities to witness and be a part of different phases of our DIY punk scene — sometimes ever growing, at times considerably shrinking and more often than not, evolving. While people come and go and/or grow out of it, what's always kept me mesmerized about punk is the amount of energy always brought back in by new groups of people and of course new bands. The twists and turns that re-shape old ideas into new as well as keeping certain genres of punk music and ethics alive.

In this particular case, I may not do the band description justice by saying something like: "they sound like a mid to late '80s melodic influenced hardcore band who sing passionate lyrics about the scene, politics and social issues from a Latino punk band's perspective." However that's exactly what draws me to Descarados. Raymon, Gordo, Mike and Carlos are definitely not new comers to the scene but definitely innovative in what they contribute to punk. As I mentioned before, to me Descarados re-shapes old ideas into new and is one of the reasons why I'm excited about the punk scene today, same as I was 25 years ago.

Intro and interview by Heric Dueñas
Photos by Alex Frixione, Sergio Amalfitano and Martin Sorrondeguy
Descarados son:
Carlos, Mike, Gordo, Raymon

MRR: Let's start off with how Descarados became a band. Aside from the long standing friendship you guys have, what triggered getting together a band being that half of you lived in Southern California and the other half lived in Chicago at the time?

Mike: First it was a desire to make music with friends regardless of geographical distance, and also as an excuse to hang out.

Raymon: I think that very thing [friendship] is the foundation of this band. Sin Orden came through the west coast, I wanna say the summer of 1999. That's how me and Mike met Carlos and Gordo. Mike and I were playing in this band Esperanza and were invited to play Chicago Fest in 2001. There we hooked up again and we just seemed to never lose touch from then on. Carlos took a brief trip to L.A. in 2002 and stayed with Mike. We thought why not attempt to do a quick band while he was out here.

Carlos: I just knew I wanted to be part of this project with my homies from Califas. The demo was rushed because of my time in Cali, but the melodic sound was already brewing in the minds of Mike and Ray.

Raymon: Mike and I always loved bands like Husker Du, Rites of Spring, Ignition, the Faith and wanted to do something along those lines. We practiced in my bedroom, wrote six songs and recorded them. All this in a week's time, right before Carlos returned to Chicago.

Mike: A point of departure for us in making this band was our shared interest in mid to late eighties DC melodic hardcore bands and mid-western '80s bands. We weren't interested in mimicking any bands per se, but we did want to capture a certain feel musically and infuse it with the kinds of lyrics and content we care about, while doing it in Spanish.

Raymon: Two weeks later, Carlos flew back out and we played our first show with Kontraattaque in Mexicali, Mex.

MRR: How well do you remember that first show, especially being right across the border in Mexico? How different is it to play in a place like Mexicali even though it's only three and a half hours across the border from Los Angeles?

Raymon: I remember being worried because we knew before hand that kids in Mexicali love their punk hard and fast! I didn't know what to expect when they would here us. Kids put a lot of time and effort when putting on shows from renting the equipment for everyone to share to making it an actual community event. When I say community, I mean kids, parents and elders from the neighborhood show up, not just punks.

Carlos: I was nervous because I didn't think that the Mexicali punks would be into our sound. But it was awesome. The punks were into it and were moshing all crazy.

MRR: After the demo came out back in 2002 and your first couple shows, there was a six or seven year gap until your 12"

EP came out. Your musical style changed as well. Is there a specific reason why it took so long in between releases and also, comparing both the demo and 12" EP, what was the reasoning behind progressing into a more melodic hardcore band?

Raymon: Distance, school, work, raising a family I think all played a part in the lack of mobility as a band. In that six to seven year gap we all still kept in touch almost every day. Our original drummer was long gone from the band. It was only natural to ask Gordo to drum. He was a homie, and in all honesty, he should have been playing drums for Descarados originally. Descarados started very spur of the moment, and Gordo was in Chicago at the time Carlos was visiting the west coast. Like everything we do, the 12" (musically) was rushed, at least to me it was.

Mike: Like most of our recordings, everything has been put together very quickly. The demo songs were obviously our first songs and they were written with urgency both because we wanted it that way, and because we had no other choice. As far as the 12", Carlos and Gordo were visiting from Chicago and were only there for a brief time. We had to write and record quickly.

Raymon: ...I feel mainly because of my fucking job. I'm always at work and get little time off and try to split it between my family and these guys, who are also my family. We knew we wanted to incorporate more of a mid-'80s DC sound to this record. We wanted to make a personal sounding record. We shacked up at my house during winter in the Mojave Desert and wrote songs. Our friend Diego Irigoyen set up shop in the garage and we recorded the 12", again all in about less than a week.

Gordo: Umm, I guess Mike and Ray were always into that more melodic hardcore style. So we just tried to incorporate more melodic beats I guess. I don't think we had like an agenda that we wanted to sound melodic or certain style, sometimes it just happens that way because of the style of noise we were listening to.

Mike: At the time we were listening to a lot of Husker Du and other eighties melodic SST bands and I think our writing borrowed a lot from that sound. We weren't sure what it was gonna sound like but it ended up with a very raw feel while still retaining a lot of melody. As far as the long gap between releases, it was mainly because of us just being busy with life and our own respective activities. Sin Orden, and Mugre were becoming much more active bands and touring during those years, so Descarados took a bit of time off. By the time we got back together again to record the 12" we had an entirely new energy going on with the inclusion of Gordo on drums. We played the old songs a bit differently, and it just felt entirely natural to do that. I don't think it was intentional. We just played the songs that way. The recording reflected that.

MRR: On the new 7", ***El Canto De Los Humildes,*** **I notice a dominant feel of what bands were doing in the mid to late '80s and early '90s. Not only musically but also very rooted to the DIY ethics/passion in lyrical content as well as how Stonehenge released the record. How do you feel about this release and can you elaborate on how it came about?**

Carlos: We are very proud of this release, especially because it was very different from our previous release.

Mike: A lot of time had passed since the one-sided 12" came out. When we got together again to write songs, we gave ourselves more time to let the riffs come together and flow.

Raymon: I think we all felt the last record was a bit rushed. We knew what was missing from the last record musically and wanted to include that in the 7".

Mike: We weren't in a rush as we had been with the demo and 12" and I think the writing is a bit more layered than the three chord riff-style of the demo. Lyrically its way more introspective and personal, but I think without losing passion and edge.

Raymon: We wanted to challenge ourselves to write songs that meshed our politics on a personal level. I love bands that are straight to the point with their lyrics. There's nothing more exciting to me than listening to a band calling Ted Hayes a motherfucker. But I think for us, and this band, we wanted to take a different approach compared to our other bands and write lyrics that were personal and open to interpretation.

Carlos: I found it difficult to record and write lyrics for this record, because I am so used to writing for fast hardcore, but Desca is different and I put myself out there more. Hopefully people can see and feel the work we put in this.

Mike: Christophe at Stonehenge showed interest early on. Him and I have traded records since the mid 1990s, and we were very grateful that he was able to do it. He put a lot of effort into it and it shows. The look of it is very early 1990s but we like that. Like most hardcore kids, we love records that are hand-screened and jam packed with posters, lyric sheets, booklets, etc.

Gordo: We have always been intrigued with the record covers that have more of a DIY sense to it. So if you get a record that has a screen print or something that stands out from all the rest and not just a photocopy, not to say there's something wrong with that, but it says more about the person that put it out, and the people that did the music cuz its more hands on and you get a feel of that person and all the sweat and blood that went into it and I think we all love those types of records that are more unique in the sense of doing certain things like silk screen a poster or doing the translation in a language that none of us speak, things like that.

Raymon: I think records have lost that "hands on" feel to them. You know, the feeling you use to get when you got a record from a band and you knew who ever put it out, put a lot of work into the shit, with whatever resources they had. They made it their own. You would play the record, listen, and absorb everything from the lyrics down to the packaging. Our 12" was silk screened by the Silenzio Statico kids and we loved the way it came out. With the Stonehenge 7", Christophe did an amazing job with the record. He captured everything we thought the record should look like.

Born Against

MRR: Why do you think that "hands on feel" on a DIY record has been lost? Is it the accessibility to download free music from blogs nowadays, which creates for many people to not even bother to buy the records anymore therefore making it difficult for a band/label to put so much effort into a release? Or is it maybe that the scene has gone so retro lately that it's much more important for a band/label to capture the simplicity of how records were released back in the early '80s?

Raymon: I think it's a bit of everything you mentioned which also includes the cost of pressing vinyl. You can't ignore the fact that downloading music has affected the way records are put out. Labels are pressing lesser quantities for their releases, but in order to get that price break, they might do four or five releases at a time. So it's difficult to put a heavy amount of detail and energy to the packaging of the record when you have more than one release coming out. You usually find that a DIY label that maybe puts out one-three releases a year tends to come out with records that have that something a little extra. You can spend a little more attention to detail when your attention revolves around that one or two releases.

Carlos: Retro

MRR: When writing lyrics for songs like "Columnas" or "Espacios" from your latest EP, based on the inserts included with the record, how important is it to be able to transcend that message/passion to a non-Spanish speaking person in the punk scene? Is it possible to still be able to transcend that feeling or that message through lyric translations or explanations in the record?

Raymon: We sing in Spanish because we want kids like us that are involved in punk to be able to relate to what we're saying. We want to make a connection with them first before anyone else. The songs might mean something different to each individual, but that's what was intended when writing the lyrics. We all pretty much have a hand in writing the lyrics. We can tell you what the songs mean to us through the translations and explanations in the 7", but a young brown kid might read our lyrics and they might find a certain line that sticks out to them and they can relate it to something they're going through as a person of color and totally make that song mean something personal to them. I think that's why we write lyrics that are open to interpretation and not as straight forward. When I was young and just barely involved in punk, I honestly felt very intimidated by all these white punk bands talking about politics. They would get up on stage and talk about racism, the Zapatistas, privilege and used these big words to show that they maybe took a college course in sociology and now they're gonna write songs about it. I didn't think I was "smart" enough, or could articulate as well as them. To me, that's what songs like "Espacios" and "Caras" are about. Finding your voice through whatever tool you choose to express it with and not let anyone speak in your place. Naturally, certain things get lost in translation, certain expressions or meanings.

Carlos: Following what Ray said, we are hoping that Latin@s and people of color can connect to us even though it's not fast hardcore. It's a different sound with lyrics that can be interpreted on a personal level by everyone.

Mike: I don't know if it's possible to transcend that feeling or message to someone else through lyric translations and/or explanations. We try anyways because it's important for us to try and give some kind of context for our songs but I'm not sure how important that is for our listeners. I'm more of the belief that people connect with music, regardless of whether it's in the language you speak or not, when it syncs up to their own lives in specific ways. We certainly try to channel our passion for what we do when we play live and hope that other people feel it, but ultimately people engage with music in their own ways despite what we write in our lyric sheets.

MRR: Why do you feel its important now to make that connection with Latin@s and people of color specifically? How do you avoid making kids in the scene feel intimidated or overwhelmed with information, the way you were made to feel when just getting into punk in the mid '90s?

Raymon: Well for me personally, if I talk or write about issues such as immigration and race to other people of color, it's not so much me trying to sound preachy and overwhelm kids, but more like, "Hey, these are my experiences, my faults, this is what my parents, grandparents went through coming to this country and I'm using punk to express that." I'm using my personal experience in the punk scene to make that connection and not necessarily something I might of read about in a book. I felt intimidated because honestly, I didn't know any better. I started going to punk shows because I liked punk music. I didn't make any connection between personal politics and punk. I heard people that didn't come from my background or my family's background talk about issues that affected us. When I first heard bands like Kontraattaque, Crudos, and Former Members of Alfonsin, is when I knew you could use punk as a tool and not just to play music with.

Carlos: I believe that we are focusing on our Raza because we want to empower them and not target them in a negative way like how this society sees us. In the '90s I learned so much more about the world through punk than what I learned in school, so we need to bring it back

MRR: Going back to the lyrics for "Espacios," when I read them, they made me think about the current state of the scene and that "connection" with kids that you guys refer to. I thought about how in L.A. and San Francisco, this basic aspect is being compromised with older punks mostly booking "18 and over" shows (sometimes 21+) and justifying it in the form of "so young kids don't continue to fuck up our DIY spaces" or "it's cool, there's really no young kids in our scene right now anyways." How do feel about age limit shows? And how about the punk bands that are passing through these places (while on tour) and are ok with it because it seems like it's the only way to get a show in the area?

Raymon: Kid is a term I use for everyone. Like, "Have you talked to Gordo? What's that kid been up to?" I don't mean it literally. But I'm glad it helped bring up a good question. I don't fault anyone for playing a 21+ show here and there so long as you're not playing 21+ exclusively. Sometimes that's the only other alternative for the person that books a show for a touring band. It's up to the band to either play or not to play and move on to the next city. 21+ venues are that because of the alcohol laws. I don't understand why there are 18+ shows. Those shows specifically separate people because of age. There are always people and bands coming and going in the punk scene so you're always going to have young people involved in punk. When you're young is when punk to me is the most sincere and dangerous.

It's raw, exciting, scary and you're gonna learn a lot of things about yourself.

Carlos: DIY punk is about all ages shows, but it is very difficult for a all ages space to make it past a year. In Chicago there's only a couple of houses that have been around for a while, but most of the time it is tough to find a space, so bars and clubs are booked for shows. I just don't believe we should play at venues that are 21+, because you don't want kids to "fuck it up." That's a stupid excuse to separate the scene, just so you can drink your beer and stand there while a band plays. It's the kids who keep punk alive and fresh.

MRR: Also, reading the song explanations insert included in the 7" for this same song "Espacios," there is a line that states "There is still so much to be done" in reference to the punk scene. How do you deal with those flaws after being part of the scene for so many years? How do you pick the ones most important for you to address whether it's through Descarados or individually as a person?

Raymon: We're never gonna perfect the punk scene. We can challenge each other and ourselves but were always going to be flawed. It's human nature. I try and focus on things that I know in the long run will influence my kids.

Carlos: Just because were older doesn't mean were not pissed, and still want to change shit. We are just doing it in an individual way, whether in our work, school or family. If we didn't want change, we would just be at 21+ clubs or not playing punk anymore.

MRR: On a related subject I guess, addressing issues within our scene, there's been some controversy lately in regards to Scion sponsored punk/HC shows happening throughout the US. I guess they started with rock and metal, now it's also with bands within the punk scene. Any thoughts on that?

Raymon: To be honest, I had no idea this was going down until about a month ago. I think we all feel the same about the punk scene. We tend to take it very personal because it's a very intimate thing to us. People put a lot of work into this from putting out records, booking shows, playing in bands, doing zines (blogs), workshops and fests. It's very hands on. For a corporation like Toyota to then come in and throw money around and set up shows, it tries to lessen all the work that's already been done. We no longer feel like we're part of something unique. I try not to spend energy dwelling on the shit. I have a lot of other stuff going on. If a band decides to go that route, so be it. They made their choice and you're making yours if you want to support them or not. People change, ideas change. We can't worry all our lives about people "selling out" in punk. Like I said earlier punk has a revolving door. You're gonna miss what's coming in if you're too worried about who's going out.

Carlos: It's fine that bands sign to Scion, they demonstrate the lack of contact in their message, and that it's all about the music. DIY punk is more than music and will never be bought off by some greedy corporation.

MRR: Going back a bit to the previous three questions, many of these same people who oppose the Scion sponsored shows are ok with going to age limit shows created by other punks in their own scene. So is it: "Corporations Keep Your Hands Off Punk!" or "Older punks making punk elite by keeping under age kids out of shows." How is it possible to give one of these issues more validity than the other?

Raymon: Between the two, I think it all comes down to resources. Obviously, Scion has the means (money) to come up with proper permits, rental space, money for bands more so than a kid from the barrio trying to set up a DIY show for a touring band and hoping the cops don't shut it down. I think in this situation, its lack of resources that forces people to set up shows in a 21+ space. I know that's not always the case and there are some people who book those shows strictly based on age. Big business and major record labels have always had interest in what goes on in the underground and there's always been resistance towards it. Punks have always found ways to have shows. In backyards, basements, living rooms, under bridges.

DESCARADOS
FP

MRR: Looking in retrospect, what is different now being in a band like Descarados as opposed to what it was like to be in a band for you twelve years ago? (Not isolating Carlos and Gordo, it's a given that they have been playing in Sin Orden for over ten years, however this could be different for both of them as Sin Orden may have meant something different to them ten-twelve years ago than what Descarados means to them currently).

Carlos: I guess for myself, Sin Orden has evolved as our lives have changed from when we were teenagers to now, but playing in Desca, it's a sound that I have acquired as I got older.

Raymon: The only serious bands I've done in the last twelve years aside from Descarados were Esperanza and Mugre. Esperanza was done when I was younger. Punk was everything to me. It was such a learning tool for me. As a young person of color, it empowered me to be able to have a voice. I learned about politics through music and people. I met a lot of people who still to this day are my good friends. I remember being in high school, and listening to Embrace for the first time. I told myself, "What the fuck is this! This doesn't sound like Minor Threat!" As I got a little older I was like, "I get it now." That's how I feel about Descarados.

Mike: For me personally it's not a whole lot different. Twelve years ago I was 21 years old, so I suppose that means I had a lot more time and freedom to make music with bands and put out records. But the energy of playing with Descarados remains the same. I still get amped about making music and being creative with my friends.

Gordo: I don't think there is any real difference. Obviously, musically there is a difference. But I think the approach of the band has always been the same. A group of friends that get together with the same type of ideas to try to create something that you can't create by yourself. Just like other bands that we've been in, it's the same type of idea where we tried to create music or imagery through what we got through our friendship, through our experiences. So cutting off the actual music part to it, it's the same approach. It's a group of friends that get together to try to create music, art, whatever the case maybe. The sound of the music is different but not the approach.

MRR: ...but besides the obvious: friendships, the energy, how about in content? Some of you guys are parents, other's acquiring a PhD...you don't think that has a different impact on how you approach this band or write your lyrics twelve years more mature maybe? More knowledgeable? Maybe more pissed off at the state of current things or maybe even more tolerable?

Raymon: I think being a parent for me has definitely shaped the away I approach this band. I'm a punk at heart but my priorities have obviously changed. Being a parent has made me more emotional as I get older and my kids get older. My son is seven and daughter is fourteen so I'm learning the art of being patient. I wanna be able to present something that my kids might look at and find interesting and maybe even get involved if they ever wanted to.

Carlos: Of course we're still pissed, but also we try and bring those DIY ethics into the way we raise our family, or the way we deal with education.

MRR: With that in mind, looking at specific issues like the continuing struggles people of color have in the US whether it be anti-immigration laws in Arizona or US foreign policy continuing to exploit "third world" Latin American countries, as Latinos, does it make a difference for you or your community to partake in the system and vote? Is there any good that can come of voting that makes you feel hopeful? Or is not voting and not wanting to take part a better choice for our communities? If so, how is it better?

Carlos: I do not believe in the system we live in, so I don't vote. But I do believe that there's a lot of racist and homophobic legislation that people should be protesting creating civil disobedience to force these whack ass politicians to vote against it, and if people want to vote go for it. Many people argue that if you vote for a "good" politician thing will change, they will change it from the inside but they never do, only until we change this corrupt system.

Raymon: It's only natural for some people to wanna vote on bills that are targeting family members or communities that they live in. I think people find different ways that help them feel empowered, through civil disobedience, voting, student and community organizing. Not everyone believes in the voting process and finds other alternatives to be heard. I think a lot of people got caught up in this last presidential election. We all saw something historic happen, which some people felt and feel very connected to. I voted for Obama and I realize now that I was caught up in the moment. I wanted to be part of history, seeing a person of color as president. Just because someone is a person of color doesn't mean they're gonna have the interest of poor, working people in mind once they get in a position of power. I knew better than that and I still let myself become involved. There is still police brutality and ICE raids in working communities of color in L.A. even though there is someone as mayor with the last name Villaraigosa, and there's still exploitation in Latin American countries because of US imperialism even though Obama is president.

MRR: With a few releases now under your belt and a couple of small tours, how happy are you with what the band has accomplished up to this point? Is there anything that you wish you had approached differently?

Mike: I wish we could get together more often. But I plan to keep making noise with these guys for many, many years to come whether that's in the form of Descarados or some other band.

Gordo: I am pretty happy with the situation that half of us are from the West Coast and the other ones are from the Midwest. Being that we are so separated and we can still get together and make music or make noise is pretty cool. I wouldn't want to change anything because if it was a different situation, then I think it would be a different monster, Descarados would be different. Maybe it would be a little watered down since we would all be in the same city playing more shows. The way it is now, we only get to play a little bit of shows and when we do get together and play, it's really exciting. Its different then being in the same city where that excitement kind of dies away as opposed to looking forward to playing a mini tour sometime.

MRR: Thanks guys for letting me do this interview, any final thoughts, merch plugs or information on how people can contact Descarados?

Raymon: Thanks for doing this interview. There might be a couple of distros that maybe have our one-sided 12". Check Todo Destruido outta Texas. Our 7" on Stonehenge is out in Europe and hopefully will be available here in the US by the time this comes out. New songs being written as we speak. Get at us through Carlos (sin_orden@yahoo.com)

Carlos: Hit us up for shows and records. Hope to play more shows in the future.

DESCARADOS

CRAZY SPIRIT
WARCRY
SHITTY LIMITS
DESKONOCIDOS
KROMOSOM
DISCHARGE
UNLEARN
YADOKAI
CERVIX

MUNDO MUERTO
RATFACE
VERRATERISCH
XEROXCIDE
NEEDLES
DOOM
BOG PEOPLE

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ERNST AND THE EDSHOLM REBELS

Swedish first generation hardcore punx Ernst and the Edsholm Rebels (aka E.A.T.E.R.) were around between 1982 and 1989. Attentive MRR readers will know the classic Doomsday Troops EP from 1983 (which will be reissued in 2011) while the more serious hardcore nerd will also recall their appearance on V/A Really Fast compilation LP volume 1. In 2010 Ernst was resurrected and the old timer has gone on to release new material. Earlier this autumn US punx and skins were treated to a total mangel attack extended US tour. Mikael Sörling of Profitblaskan fanzine fame interviewed the band for your reading pleasure.

Interview by Mikael Sörling, intro and translation by Tony Gunnarsson. Photos by P Jee Johannesson and from Mastmagazinet.

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MRR: Ernst and the Edsholm Rebels belong to the classical Swedish punk names and are generational friends with bands such as Anti-Cimex, Missbrukarna, Asta Kask and Mob 47. The band split up in 1989 but resurrected 2010. Why?
Gröten: This band and punk music is closely stored in my heart, and I have old friends with whom I can create energy and have good feelings with. We met in early 2010 again
to see if we could do
our thing with each of our current situations.
If it wouldn't sound good, we'd say, "fuck it" and do something more meaningful. We should not become a cover band of ourselves.
Åke: We started a website in 2005 (at www.eater.se) and from there on it has just kept going. People have asked for records and gigs. The LP would be released in time with Punk Illegal Festival 2010 so we were asked if we would play there. Since most of E.A.T.E.R.'s message is more relevant than ever it did not feel at all like some sort of nostalgia.
Hasse: Despite the fact that I quit E.A.T.E.R. after just one year, the band has always had a warm place in my heart! Punk has of course always been there so when the ideas started... well, it just felt pretty natural to see what we could do with it all.

MRR: What was the internal discussion like within the group when the idea to reform came up?
G: It grew on me as Downfall records wanted to release the LP System Failure...Abort and Retry in 2006 with a release show at their club in Göteborg. I was interested to hear from the others about trying and rehearsing — to see if we could get the same attitude and nerve out of these songs we made in the 1980s. We discussed this for quite some time but eventually it ran out in the sand. Then when Distortion released the LP in 2010 we no longer just talked about meeting, we actually met up and started all of this without thinking too much about what would come of it. My idea was to get all the original members from the early years '82-'83 but it was impossible because of personal circumstances.
Micke: Personally I was fucking critical about any reforming of the band. I did not want to do "a fun thing" or some sort of nostalgia trip.

I demanded that this would have to be done seriously, and that it should be better than everything we had done earlier or else I was not going to be part of it. This was simply because I am not going to do a project like this that means a lot to me if I can't go all the way and do it properly.
Å: I have to agree with Micke but at the same time it's tongue in cheek. I don't think one can do this type of thing without the fun – to get on with each other, when the chemistry works, to have fun rehearsing and playing.
H: In 2005 Gröten and I had already discussed if it was possible to reform the band. The song "Jurassica" originates from that conversation. It's on a new Swedish punk compilation LP called Turist i tillvaron.

MRR: What's the line-up today?
Patrik Znake Andersson bass guitar, Emil Edman drums, Hasse Dalgren vocals, Åke Källback guitar, Micke Larsson vocals and Mikael Gröten Karlsson guitar.

MRR: Can you talk a little about the compilation and System failure...Abort and Retry that Distortion released. There must have been others who wanted to reissue Ernest musical treasure chest?
M: We were in contact with Downfall records that were also interested, but nothing came out of it all.
Å: We have had a number of requests – one, two or three from the US and two from Germany, but Bodenmalm at Distortion records came first...
G: This record compiles recordings from '82-'84, songs from Chaos Cassette Vol. 1, Really Fast, Doomsday Troops EP and also some songs from the two records Abort the system and Dieu et létat that had previously remained unreleased. It is also supposed to be released on CD, with some bonus tracks from the concert AJZ Bielefeld, Germany '86. However we have few hopes about this since Distortion is a fucking sham company.

MRR: Ernst and the Edsholm Rebels was formed in 1982 in the small town Grums. There cannot have been many punks there. Where did the idea to start a punk band come from? And what was the reaction to the band?
G: We were not many so-called punks in Grums, perhaps a few more than ten or so. The reason that our music emerged as punk is perhaps because we're all self-taught musical players. It was easy to learn a few chords. We sang about how we experienced our lives and the world around us at the time. No fucking hassle—four, five chords and simple basic lyrics from frustration. I remember we were well received by the adult world; after all we did something meaningful instead of just hang out in the village and cause trouble. There were perhaps just some "raggare" [i.e. Swedish rockers, listen to Rude Kids and you'll understand! –ed.] who liked to fight with us. We were probably interesting "victims" when you consider how normal people dressed at the time.
H: I grew up in the even smaller nearby village Segmon. There were quite a few punks there proportionally to the general population, the "raggare" were truly in a minority! I began playing with a band in 1980, if I am not mistaken. That band split up around '82 and E.A.T.E.R. formed shortly after. Punk was perhaps not so much of an ideology to begin with; it was mostly about just having a lot of fucking fun and listening to/playing great music. Reactions were perhaps mixed—some hated us while others thought it was a good thing that we had something to do.

MRR: What bands were you influenced by?
M: The classic fanzine question. I listen to so much different music that it is impossible to name one particular band as a source for inspiration. But if I have to say, I think early Black Flag, Dead Kennedys, Crass, Discharge and UK Subs were important when I began playing in E.A.T.E.R around '83.
G: Some of the "No Future" bands and some of the Swedish bands were also sources of inspiration for me.
H: It varied almost from day to day. No bands mentioned, no bands forgotten!

MRR: How was it to be a punk band out in the countryside at the beginning of the 1980s?
M: It was fun. It was something to do and it felt like something meaningful.
Å: Even if I had not been in E.A.T.E.R. at that time I think it is hard to reach out, to spread the material if you don't have the right channels. There were a couple of true "fire-souls" making things happen, but unfortunately there weren't more than that. It is so much easier when you have something meaningful or controversial to say. Guerilla Marketing!
H: It was mostly positive; we had a fucking lot of fun while we were fucking creative! But sure, you had to run for your life occasionally! Ha ha ha...

MRR: Many Swedish punk bands came from the countryside, why do you think that is?
M: I think this is because smaller towns out in the countryside are principally old producing or industrial towns and a lot comes along with that. In economic recession young people who live in industrial towns know that there is no future in a local job, as people are made redundant by jobs at local factories. The only thing left is to invest energy in either sport or music, and if you can't make it on to the ice hockey team then music may be the only opportunity to create a meaningful existence. This is very much a question of social class. Even though Sweden has many larger industrial towns, at least based on our own experience, the largest proportion of the working class lives out in rural towns. I think that largely—even if there are exceptions—that punk and rock music overall primarily appeals to the working class and lower middle class kids. In the larger cities it was primarily kids from the suburbs, in other words working class kids, who started bands in the '70s.
Å: There were not many other things to choose from, moped or guitar!
H: If you were not interested in sports or didn't liked moped mechanics there wasn't that much else to do. It was also easy to reach out to a small sized audience through playing at youth clubs that were around back then.

MRR: A lot of things happened in 1983. You recorded the Doomsday Troops EP, for example. Today that record is considered a classic. What is your opinion of the record today, both musically and lyrically? Is it true that Jello Biafra and Pushead distributed the record in the US?
M: I think the record stands up well today, even if you have to take it for what it is. If you want to listen to a musically

well-played and over-produced record then perhaps Doomsday Troops EP is not the best choice, but if you want to hear music that conveys a feeling of anger and frustration then it is absolutely right. I don't know what the source is for the story about Jello and Pushead distributing Doomsday Troops comes from. What's true is that I traded records with Jello in the '80s, but that was for personal use. I sent Swedish records to him, and he sent records released on Alternative Tentacles to me. It was never a question of distribution; we just traded records—one for one. This was moreover some time after Doomsday troops had long since sold-out.

MRR: You were also on the first volume of Really Fast compilation LP. What has that meant for you?
G: That we were on the absolutely first V/A raw punk record in Sweden gave us more publicity than we thought. The advantage of being on compilation records is that more people listen to the bands than when you make your own EPs, it has much wider circulation to listeners. Swedish punk from the early 1980s was incredibly good and it is ok that we're a part of that. Our songs on the compilation record Krigets Vansinne and Doomsday Troops were also the first songs we ever wrote. There were some very fucking proud young boys who received 25 copies of the record, which we picked up at A-Records in Göteborg. The feeling to hold a record in my hands that we were on was strong. We had accomplished something.
H: Yes, you felt incredibly proud to be on that record.

MRR: And the year after, 1984, you were on ROIR's cassette Worldclass punk. Doomsday Troops record must have made an impression?
Groton: Considering that our song "Krieg's fanzine" was on the ROIR cassette, I think it was the Really Fast record that spread to the US and thereby what made that first impression. It was after that we got letters from people around the world that wanted to do interviews and requesting us to be on compilation cassettes, EPs, LPs... My lasting impression of the Doomsday record is that there are five songs with energy and attitude that sixteen-seventeen year old boys today would probably find difficult to create. Then you have the negative side, with a record that is so "popular" there are disgusting record collectors—who are not one bit interested in lyrics and music—and who own it because of it's rarity. AS for myself, I have given away everything we have ever been on—cassettes, compilation records, the Doomsday test press and the EP itself and so on—to young guys who have a feeling for our music and who value the actual songs.

MRR: You recorded two more EPs, Abort the system and Dieu et L'état, but they were never released. What happened with the releases?
M: I remember that we desperately wanted to release more records, but we did not have the economic resources to do so. The recordings that we had thought about using, I think retrospectively, don't quite measure up either. Perhaps back then I had subconsciously thought this as well.
G: As I remember it we had already musically drifted apart by the time of the recording of Abort the system and Dieu et L'état. At that time, there was already a tendency toward more and more parts that were of a traditional rock music, four beat style—and that was not E.A.T.E.R. I am probably responsible for parts of that since it was often me who came up with the music in the band. Then we also did not find a producer who was interested in how we wanted it to sound when we recorded, so in terms of sound it was enormously different from the earlier recordings from the Kloaken.
Å: While these recordings are not the best, there are several quite good songs that deserve to be re-

recorded better for posterity!

MRR: We used to go to Micke Blomqvists' (from the band Asta Kask) studio Kloakens Alternativa Anti-studio to record, like so many other bands did back then. How was it to work with Micke? Can you remember anything special that happened during that time?

M: I remember it as fun and educational. Micke Blomqvist was very passionate for the bands potential when recording. It was expensive and a hassle at that time, and he made sure to create these possibilities from his own experiences and resources. Few individuals have meant as much for punk in Sweden during the 1980s. I have nothing but respect for Micke Blomqvist.

G: I was there visiting Micke many times. I can say that this guy had an enormous heart and patience with all the bands that had the privilege to record at Kloaken. One unforgettable anecdote was, unless I remember incorrectly, was during the recording of Doomsday Troops when our disgustingly skilled drummer Pelle taught Asta Kask's new drummer Bjurre how to play two-beat. Another thing happened during a recording with my other band InCharge when Jonsson from Anti-Cimex was visiting, he wanted to take part and play on some songs. So it was, that boys from other bands would come visit Kloaken during the bands recording sessions. Töreboda and Micke was punk metropolis in the country at that time, no one has meant as much for Swedish punk as Micke Blomqvist.

H: I can just agree with all this, Micke has meant a lot for E.A.T.E.R, a man with a big heart!

MRR: It seems like there were quite few troublesome Ernst years with a lot of different wills during '86-'89. You did a European tour, but apart from that, there is quite little information about you during those years. What happened during that time?

G: There were many reasons why we split up the band. Between '82-'84 we met extremely often. We rehearsed twice weekly, were out playing punk shows and partied all around Sweden. That can break up relationships when you're sixteen-seventeen years old. You don't always have the same interests and each of you develops with age. In actuality, we split up the band in '85 after Jerker had prematurely passed away, but we got asked to play some gigs in Europe and finished that tour in '86. What remained after that tour was not E.A.T.E.R., but a group of boys who met and played music 10% of the time and were drugged 90% of the time.

MRR: Last year you were up on the stage for the first time in about twenty years. How did that feel? And what was the reaction from the audience? Did they know your songs? Did they shout along with Krigets Vansinne and Doomsday Troops?

G: To once again be on stage with this band was fucking nerve-wracking. It was the largest stage of the whole festival. On the other hand, I have played music with Znake for more than twenty years, and played hundreds of shows, but when you play guitar with E.A.T.E.R. you can't rest for one second. I was so fucking focused that sometimes it was difficult to see how the audience was reacting. At the Punk Illegal festival show we only played songs from '82-'84 and certainly young and old were singing along to the songs. So we must have made some sort of impression.

Å: From someone who is new in the band, I felt good and nervous. We had built up quite high expectations for ourselves. Of course many knew the songs, they have been available for download at our website for several years. I was additionally surprised that there were so many young people who could scream along with the songs!

H: I was so fucking nervous! All the lyrics sheets did stay where they should have—we had "cheated" and had the lyrics pasted up all over the stage. The reason I couldn't jump around during the performance was mostly because I was forced to cheat by reading the lyrics a lot. Oh... and of course... I had never ever stood on a stage sober before! I looked like a statue while Micke was jumping around everywhere, ha ha ha...

MRR: Your first show was at the Punk Illegal festival, a benefit festival for the organization Ingen människa är illegal that helps undocumented immigrants who are living hidden from the state. Did it feel important to be a part of that?

M: It felt important to be a part of it from that aspect, yes. I have always thought that you have to take a stand for exploited people and kick upwards, not downwards.

H and G: Yes, totally! It is entirely right to stand up for human rights.

MRR: Would you describe Ernest as a political band? Why, or why not?

M: For me, everything is political, even

music. As soon as you take a stand or have an opinion then that is political, so from that point of view we are a political band, yes. It is not that what we do is in line with any sort of political program, but our music is definitely an expression of strong feelings that originate from some sort of political analysis. Most of our lyrics—because it is usually the lyrics that are concerned when you talk music and politics—are not concerned with political issues, but they do give expression for a political stance that is built on our opinions, our background and our class belonging.

MRR: How do your lyrics differ today from back in the day? And how importance do you consider lyrics today?

M: I don't think the lyrics differ significantly now from then, maybe in the structure, but not in terms of content.

G: Lyrics are always important and the vocals are the most important instrument. I have always thought that Micke does fantastical lyrics and stories. What Micke wrote when he was sixteen-seventeen years old was totally outstanding among Swedish bands. But he writes good lyrics today as well.

H: Lyrics are everything or nothing for me! I mean some are made to feel fucking good and funny at the certain times, without any special message while others are deep and personal.

MRR: Earlier this year you followed up Doomsday Troops with If Nothing's Right, Go Left. On this record you certainly do not come across as some old nostalgics. On the contrary, it sounds very here and now—fresh and angry. How have you managed to conserve your style and what was your intention with the recording?

M: There is a lot of fucking sweat behind that new record. We wanted to make an E.A.T.E.R. record. A follow-up if you like, that's what we intended, and then we worked hard.

Å: The biggest difference is perhaps that no one has become any worse doing what we do. Additionally we have almost 30 years life experience now and sometimes it can be difficult to become happier over the years. We are absolutely angrier and perhaps more cynical!
G: I have always had a lot of punk riffs in my head and to be able to work with the fantastic lyrics that Micke and Hasse write only gives me more energy. We wanted to make a new record because we have so fucking much energy within us and now we've finally got a producer, Martin Gronert, who knew how we wanted to build up the songs and who has feeling for this type of music.

MRR: In your last recorded song "Jurassica," (which is on the Swedish punk compilation Turist i tillvaron vol 1), you're singing that you have managed to escape from the Jurassic park, how should we interpret the lyrics to this song?
H: You can interpret them this way if you want: The lyrics are about ourselves, of course—tongue in cheek, naturally. Even if you're starting to gain years it is perfectly possible to "rå-punk" that sounds good, even if some of us need to sit down while playing sometimes or perhaps move a little slower on stage.

MRR: How's your experience of the punk scene of today? What are the biggest differences between when you were playing last time around?
M: The biggest difference is that there are much better places to play today. Moreover, there is much more variation in terms of age groups. I also think that there is a little bit more professional attitude with both bands and promoters today.
Å: Thanks to the Internet most bands know of each other and it is easier to keep in touch in the scene, etc. I do think that the Swedish punk scene is feeling much more vital than it's been for a long time, spread across many different punk genres.

MRR: Does it feel weird to be 40+ years and to be playing punk? And why do you think that so many other old bands (for example Asta Kask, Mob 47 and the Bristles) are still playing?

M: No, it does not feel strange at all. It would more be strange if I had all of the sudden decided to start playing "dansbands"-music [a Swedish popular music made for dancing, mostly made by and for old timers... go figure... –ed.] just because I have reached a certain age.
G: If you have "rå-punk" music in your blood then age is not important—it is a part of me and what I stand for. On the other hand, there are people who have difficulties understanding this, nothing I can do anything about. I play this type of music because I want to do it, not because of what others think I should do. When I am out playing as a troubadour and I am essentially jukebox-machine then I am just working and I make sure to get well paid. E.A.T.E.R. is not a job: it is a community. Why other bands are still doing it and still playing might be for similar reasons—actually it is not that interesting to me why other bands do it.

MRR: Punk is no longer some sort of teenage rebellion?
M: No, probably not.
Å: For me punk has always been an attitude, maybe not so much how you sound or how you look. As I said, it's an attitude!

MRR: This autumn you're going to the US to play a two weeks long tour. How excited are you? And how did this come about?
Å: It is going to be fantastic fun, the rock'n'roll dream that you had when you were twenty years old is finally going to happen—and at a time when you're closer to 50 years old! It was a dude who got in touch with us and wanted to book a tour with one of his favorite bands. First we were a bit sceptical, but Zach, the guy who booked us, has proven that he is a through-and-through guy. Zach plays in a band called Violent Party and they are also going along on the tour.
G: Ha ha ha, I am happy that we're all over 40 when we go on this tour. I am also fucking curious to find out how we will deliver night after night. Of course it will be a personal experience and I am looking forward to playing the gigs, but also that I will have the privilege to share this trip with other people who are very close to my heart—that's fantastic! USA is going to get 45 minutes of honest "rå-punk" with energy and attitude. Doomsday Troops over America, by Sweden's grumpiest band, of all time!

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MRR: It is true that you have had problems to get visas to go to the States?

M and G: As of now no one has any problems to get the visa.
Å: There were no problems with the visa, on the contrary! But we have not got through the passport check yet...
H: I even got two visas!

MRR: What is going to happen later in the autumn/winter?
G: Amongst ourselves, we have discussed a little about what we want to do in regards to gigs and we've agreed to not do individual gigs in the future. We will only do five-ten day tours. We will write new material, maybe a new record. We have discussed with our "neighbours" Avskum to make a split 10" and after that maybe go on tour together. We'll see. We are too old to just be talking, if we want to do something more with the band then we will. You can read about what is happening to E.A.T.E.R. at www.eater.se

MRR: And finally: Who is Ernst and who were the Edsholm rebels?
H: Ernst was an elderly man who lived in Segmon when it all started. I was working in the summer as a residential caretaker. I perceived this man as fucking grumpy and whiny, had a couple of real heart to hearts with him. But then one beautiful day he moved away to Edsholms care home over at Slottsbron and no one was happier than me! It was about the same time as I started to socialize with Gröten and the boys, and the rest is history so to speak...

LEFT FOR DEAD
MASS MEDIA DISTORTION
MRR REVIEW OCT 2011

LEFT FOR DEAD – "Mass Media Distortion" CD

This LEFT FOR DEAD is not the killer hardcore band of the same name that I thought (hoped) this was when I first pulled it out of my review box, but they're pretty goddamn amazing as well. These guys have been pelting out a blend of tuneful and heavy UK anarcho-punk and a bit of straight up metallic rawk since the '90s and show no sign of letting up. Maybe they're even better? Admittedly I was unmoved by the music at first, not really digging metal, but then the insightful and potent lyrics made me want to listen to the album again as I was halfway through. A couple of beers and a bowl hit or two later, I began to realize the incredible range of sound this band achieves, and that the metal influence was minimal. And then there are the melodic female vocals that kick in occasionally to support the lead's gruff delivery and it works brilliantly. And on the third spin I was even digging the metallic guitar riffs because they're used sparingly and in just the right places. I'm a convert! Check it out. (BG)
(Active Distribution / self-released)

Get this from Active Distribution for £5 / 7e/ $9 inc p&p worldwide (or Alternative Tentacles in the US) The female guest vocalist is Magali from La Fraction and we find beers and bowls are unnecessary to find this CD "amazing" but thanx BG!

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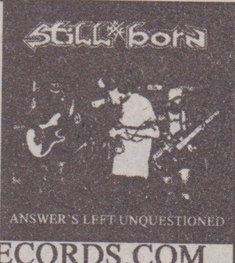

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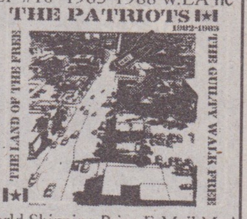

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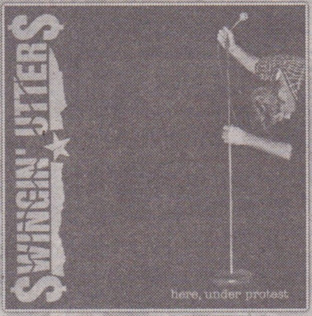
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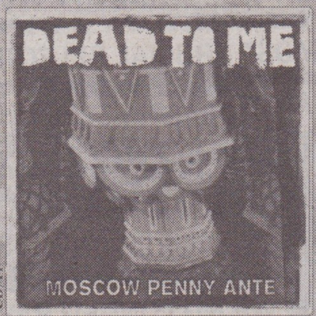
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SIST HER TRANSISTOR RESIST HER TR

The members of Resist Her Transistor rocked out in several Milwaukee-based punk and garage bands, including the Riveters and the Mandates before members Mandy Montanye and Stephanie Schreiber took a hiatus from playing music to join the local roller derby league, the Brew City Bruisers. They decided to find time for a new band and teamed up with drummer Andy Stilin. I caught up with them at a picnic table in a city park near my crappy day-job before I had to go to work. We talked about roller derby, aggression, and their new self-titled album.

Interview by Tea Krulos, Photos Art Montes.

MRR: How did the three of you end up in a band together?
Mandy: How did we end up in a band together? (Laughs.)
Stephanie: We had a band before this, not our first band, the Riveters.
Andy: And at the same time Mandy was in the Riveters, she was in our other band, the Mandates.

MRR: What made you decide to branch off into a different band?
Mandy: We joined roller derby...
Stephanie: ...Which took a lot of time and I went to third shift.
Mandy: We took a hiatus from the Riveters because of roller derby.
Stephanie: Our schedules were so crazy we couldn't match them up.

MRR: If you run into someone you know, and they haven't seen your band, how would you describe your band to them?
Stephanie: (to Mandy) What did someone tell us once? It's Sleater-Kinney doing PJ Harvey doing Joan Jett or some crazy...
Andy: Sonic Youth doing PJ Harvey covers.
Mandy: The Runaways and Sonic Youth.

MRR: Do you get compared to the Runaways a lot?
Stephanie: Yeah, I think it's just because we're girls and its rock.
Mandy: That and Steph's singing—her songs are kind of aggressive.
Andy: They're not the nice girl types. I mean...not to say that she is not a nice girl. (Laughs.)

MRR: Could you elaborate on that? How would you describe the aggression?
Stephanie: I guess, for me, it's just more fun to sing stuff that is angrier. But it is not that I'm angry. It's just, I don't know, singing happy songs...they get kind of boring pretty quick. But you get on stage, you do a stage presence, and a little bit of attitude because it is punk rock. You're going to sing more aggressively, or at least I am.

MRR: When did you start the band?
Mandy: It was after we had been skating awhile.
Stephanie: The Riveters ended right around when we started doing derby and then we kind of just melted into this band. It might have been '07, but later in the year, because we would have been doing derby for a while.
Andy: Yeah because it was wintertime. What was that bar where you guys had the derby after-party and I was like 'we should start a new band'?

MRR: So you just finished recording a CD. Tell me more about that.
Mandy: We recorded it ourselves.
Andy: Yeah, it gets to a point where I don't do well in studios, because I think of the clock ticking away, "Geez, we screwed up again. We're paying for that one." Recording to me is like being in a hospital room because you're hooked up to all this stuff and you're like, "I hate being in here." So it's nice doing it at your own place where you can relax and you don't have to worry about someone tapping on their watch. We took our time. We started at least a year ago.

MRR: You're playing your CD release party with Wanda Chrome and the Leather Pharaohs. I was kind of surprised to see their name on the bill. I haven't seen them in a long time.

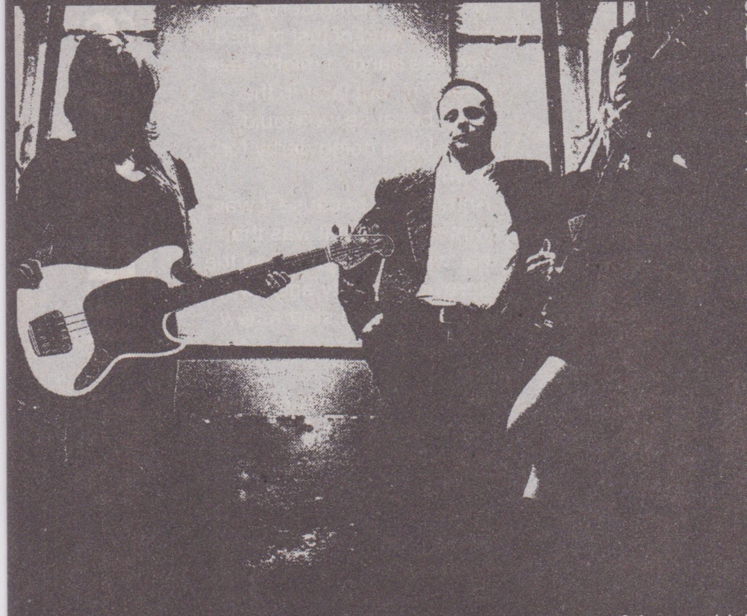
Andy: They are off and on. Cliff and Marie, who are the main people in the band, and Joel, who is their drummer most of the time, own their own business. So when they feel like doing it, they do it. They can stop whenever they want. They got to go to Europe a lot, and as the joke goes, "They love you in Europe." Well, they really do.

MRR: Yeah, I heard that.

Andy: Marie said they had been practicing again and said they wanted to play a show. I said "Yeah, Linneman's with us!" (Laughs.) They said, "Sure." But yeah, I haven't seen them play in years.

MRR: Could I get each of you to tell me some main musical influences, specifically as it relates to Resist Her Transistor?

Stephanie: Personally, I don't think about it too much. I listen to a variety of music but I do tend to go back to the basics, like Joan Jett or Sleater-Kinney. I'm not ever purposely trying to write a song to sound like anybody, it just ends up being that way because someone will be thinking that song reminds them of a singer or performer and I'll be like, "Ooooh-kaaay." I really have no idea, but I tend to like punk rock, old school ladies, new wave.



Mandy: In terms of bass players, I really like Kim Deal of the Pixies and Peter Hook of Joy Division. I think I have more of a melodic playing style, which works well in a three-piece because...

Stephanie: ...Because I'm a rhythm guitarist! (Laughs.)

Mandy: It just seems to work out for us. But in terms of musical tastes, I'm more into post punk and indie rock like Fugazi or Archers of Loaf. I think it gives me a more out-of-the-box approach to punk rock song playing—a little more angularity to things.

Andy: And I'm the old man of the group. I like all the proto-punk and early punk stuff, obviously, the Stooges or the New York Dolls. As far as new stuff, if it wasn't for these guys, I don't know what's going on out there. As far as drummers, I can't remember names, but there is the drummer from MX80 who died and then there is the drummer from Television—what's his name? I can't remember any of the names, but any of the older punk stuff is what I dig.

MRR: Do you have any favorite/ least favorite band moments you'd like to share?

Mandy: (laughs) Should we even go there?

Andy: Well, with this band, everyone thinks I'm married to one of the two of them, which is kind of funny.

Stephanie: Yeah, "Which two of you are hooking up?" I mean, why do we have to be? Why can't we just be friends?

Mandy: You can't have a girl in the band without her doing someone.

Andy: Guys are sometimes like, "Oh, there are girls in the band." Then they are surprised at how rockin' the band sounds.

Stephanie: They think you write the songs, too.

Andy: Yeah, because I'm the guy.

Mandy: You tell us what to play. There are bands like that.

Andy: "Tell them bitches what to do." (Laughs.)

Stephanie: Awesome.

Mandy: We're like your harem. Your harem of rock.

Andy: But, we haven't had anything blow up on us yet.

Stephanie: Don't jinx us!

Mandy: There have been a couple little mistakes, here and there, and a couple really great shows.

Andy: That's why I like original songs, if you screw up no one knows.

Stephanie: With originals, only you know if you're doing it right and that's all that matters. But now that we have a CD out, if people are listening to it, they're going to know.

Andy: Yes, the multitudes of fans will think, "You played that wrong!"

Stephanie: All three of them? Yes.

Andy: We got at least four.

Stephanie: Alright, maybe. Us and maybe somebody else.

MRR: What is the songwriting process like for the band?

Stephanie: Usually I'll just record some guitar and vocals, give them CDs of it, so they can listen to it and think of what they want to do. We don't have a lot of time together because of our schedules. It makes our time together more efficient so we're not just messing around.

Mandy: Yeah, we're not really into jamming.

Andy: Sometimes jamming is alright.

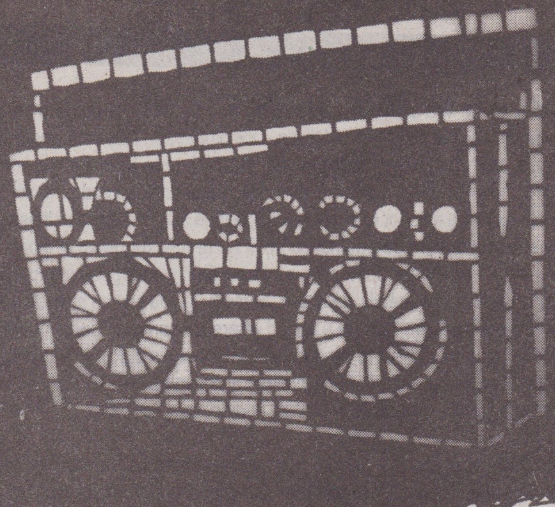
Mandy: Sometimes it's fun but we're not like, [*in a stoner's voice*]: "Let's get together and smoke weed and play music for four hours."

MRR: Did being in roller derby affect your band dynamics at all?

Mandy: I think it helped me get over my stage fright. It's still there, but I definitely think when you get knocked on your ass into a video camera in front of two thousand people, missing a note or a beat isn't a big deal. (Laughs.)

Stephanie: Well, we can drink while we're on stage, as opposed to skating. So you have the liquid courage in the one hand. And you don't have someone pounding you. You don't have to look around the whole time, unless someone throws something at you, which does occasionally happen, because they think they're being funny or whatever.

RESIST HER TRANSISTOR RESIST HER TRANSIST



$everance Package

Severance Package is a raw, powerful, garage punk band that hails from Chico, California. Chico is known the party capital of the west coast college scene, but any party being hosted by Severance Package is likely to scare the living hell out of the average indie rock college kid. For the area's thriving punk scene, however, the band is an exciting new addition. Although formed only recently, the three members are all badass, gnarly (but still pretty damn cute) veterans of Northern California punk, each having developed his or her individual aesthetic for decades. The core songwriting duo of wife and husband Robin and Josh Indar formerly fronted Black Fork—pretty much the best band on Lookout! in the mid-'90s. New drummer Michael Erpino also played in legendary bands such as Special Forces. This experience has now culminated in Severance Package's combination of raw, visceral, high-energy-yet-melodic sounds, The refined songwriting and lyrical themes clearly suggest adult punks with an understanding of the world, broad perspectives from life experiences, and a big smartass grin to help wash the glorious bitterness down. To learn more about the band, visit: http://severancepackage.org/.

Interview by John No and Megan March.

MRR: Okay, folks, essentials first. Let's start with names, job in the band, and weirdest Chico moment.

Robin Indar: I play bass and sing. My weirdest Chico moment was when I joined the Chico Mothers Club, which I can't recommend to anyone.

Josh Indar: Guitar and vocals. My weirdest Chico moment lasted two years, when I ran an alt-weekly newspaper out of a grubby little office above Duffy's Tavern. Me and one other guy wrote all the news stories, and I did a column on how to learn Esperanto. Our logo was an ape in a fedora. Obviously, it was not successful.

Michael Erpino: Drums. (Mike didn't have time to think of a weird Chico moment since he had court all week and was slaughtering goats most of the weekend.)

MRR: I love Black Fork, and I love Severance Package. What happened in between and how did the stylistic shift in the music happen? It definitely seems like the vocals are much more shared between both of you in this band.

Robin: After Black Fork broke up, Josh and I got slightly better jobs, bought a cracked-out house, fixed it up and started homesteading and waiting for the apocalypse. Somewhere in all that dreaminess I got knocked up and I didn't figure it out until I was four months along. Having so many changes in life is bound to change your sound a bit. Now we both sing and we both play instruments and we both write lyrics. I didn't play bass in Black Fork and Josh didn't really sing much before. We also don't have such rigid tempo and style as before. Black Fork was always angry, super fast punk. By being open to blues, rock'n'roll and even country, we've got a lot of the same energy, but we're just not so confined.

Josh: I think maybe we started playing that fast because we were nervous, and then it kind of became more of a challenge to see how much we could push a song without it completely falling apart. It's actually a lot harder for me to play slower. My A.D.D. kicks in, and I have to remember to concentrate. But the thing about Black Fork was that we never changed tempo—it was binary, full-speed ahead or nothing. Most of the stuff we listen to, both now and in those days—the Plugz or the Saints or X—is fierce, rockin' punk, even though it's not real fast.

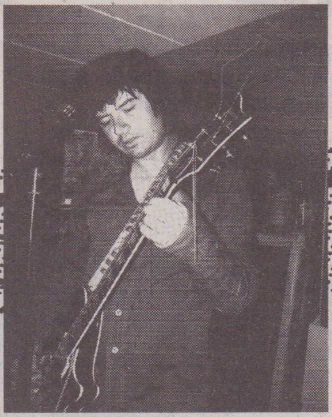
MRR: How do you balance the needs of being parents with playing in a band? Do kids make good roadies?

Robin: We have one or two nights a week where the chaos dies down and the kids are engaged in something that doesn't require our attention and we can work on songs in the other room. We also pay a babysitter once a week to come over and watch them while we practice over at Mike's. Our oldest son makes a good roadie. Our youngest, well, he doesn't know karate, but he knows ka-razy! We bring them to all-ages shows and they run around moshing and drinking soda. I think a lot of the punks think we're nuts for trying to keep up some sort of suburban lifestyle. And I'm pretty sure our square parent friends think we're nuts for being in a band at all.

Josh: I think it's cool for our kids to see how much work goes into playing music, and to know that if you really want to do something you just go ahead and do it, with no apologies. We went through a period where we panicked and thought we had to square up and go straight to be good parents, but we didn't take well to it and we soon realized we needed to be ourselves and express ourselves and have some fun or we'd just be miserable and bitter and so would our kids.

MRR: Mike, you are the band's new drummer and a veteran of seminal HC band Special Forces—the second Special Forces drummer to play with Severance Package. At what point in Special Forces' history did you play with them? How did you end up playing with Severance Package?

Mike: I played with Special Forces right after Steve Bragg left them. I'm always getting his sloppy seconds, so S.P. just made sense.



MRR: I know you've got some rad 7"s under your belt—one split in particular! Tell us about 'em! Also, word on the street is that you're working on a full-length. Are the rumors true?

Robin: The *All Down Hill* 7" was our first release which came out on Shut Up records out of Portland. It has three songs and a free MP3 download card. Our second release is a split 7" with Street Eaters called *Polluted Waters* which was put out by three different labels: Lost Cat, Dead Broke and Dirt Cult. There's a song by each band as well as an included download card of four songs! We've got seven songs recorded so far for the full-length, which we're in the process of mixing, and we're looking to get a few more songs recorded soon. It's going to come out on Mess Me Up records out of Berkeley, which also put out the Black Fork collection.

Josh: Yeah, the LP should've been done a year ago, but I broke my arm three days before we were supposed to record.

MRR: Josh, what's going on with that weird miniature keyboard thing you sometimes play?

Josh: It's a Stylophone, or a replica Stylophone, anyway. It's like a battery-powered keyboard that uses a metal-tipped stylus instead of keyboard keys. When I broke my arm we had our friend Cody do guitar so we could still play the shows we had booked, and I had never sang for a band before without a guitar or drums to hide behind. I thought if I had something to make noise with I wouldn't have to just stand there looking dumb when I wasn't singing. I had it velcroed to my cast, it was silly. At our first show with me back on guitar, I smashed it to pieces during our last song. Felt pretty good.

MRR: What's happening in Chico these days? Give us a quick scene report, *MRR* style.

Josh: It's pretty fun here lately—there's plenty of places to play, most notably Monstro's, an all-ages pizza joint booked by the local Pyrate crew. There's also a couple art galleries, the bars downtown and the usual college-town stuff. Bands from out of town get decent crowds as long as there aren't too many shows happening on the same night. As far as local bands, there really isn't a "Chico sound" to rally around, which is cool in that you usually get a bunch of totally different-sounding-but-still-awesome bands on one bill.

MRR: Robin, you kick ass at bass, is this the first band you've played bass in? How long have you been playing? How does playing bass and singing contrast with being a lead singer as you were in Black Fork, running around the stage like a maniac?

Robin: I played bass in the Users in Florida, that was my first band. We had like three songs and we played I think two shows in 1992. I had a pawn-shop bass and practiced a little and came back to the Bay Area to form the Clams. We broke up after two or three shows. I usually don't count those first bands in my "how long I've played bass" timeline since they took up about one year or less. Once Black Fork formed I was just fine with not playing bass. Singing, rather than playing an instrument, was so much easier and came really naturally to me. When I started playing bass again two years ago, it was clunky and made me feel like I was wearing concrete shoes. I could barely move without screwing up the notes. Then, when Josh encouraged me to sing *and* play bass, it was so frustratingly hard. But, like everything else, keeping at it seemed to eventually pay off and it's way less hard now.

Josh: Well, yeah, I was like, "If I have to sing and play, so do you!" It's so much easier just to lurk around the stage with a guitar and not have to front the band, but with a trio you don't get that option. At least we trade it off, and that makes it fun.

MRR: Josh, I know you've been entrenched in the academic world, how does that translate to your lyrics? I'm a big fan of the song "Miseducated."

Josh: Entrenched is about right. I wrote "Miseducated" after I got my MFA diploma in the mail, and then the next day the bill showed up, and I realized I'd just put myself in debt for the rest of my life. It's discouraging. I despise ignorance and I believe so much in education, and yet I hate how society puts out the idea that if you can afford to borrow $75,000, you get a piece of paper that supposedly makes you smart and employable—it doesn't make you either! Having all these tiers and barriers in education is really making the class system more visible and more rigid in this country. And now that there are so few jobs, a lot of people are going to give up on education altogether because, so what, you get a degree in English or History—you work your way through college slinging espressos or whatever—and once you graduate, guess what, you're still slinging espressos! I work with homeless and foster youth, and I always tell them to get their educations but to be smart about it. Don't take out loans unless you absolutely have to and don't waste any time or money on those for-profit schools because they're all scams.

MRR: Robin, do you do most of the art? Can we look forward to a Severance Package mosaic in our future?

Robin: So far I've done all of the art, but really it's often because we can't afford to pay anyone else to do it. I've been able to eke out a living as an artist (fingers crossed) and yes, perhaps someday the band art might include a tile mosaic which is my specialty. You can check out my stuff on my website: www.robinindar.com.

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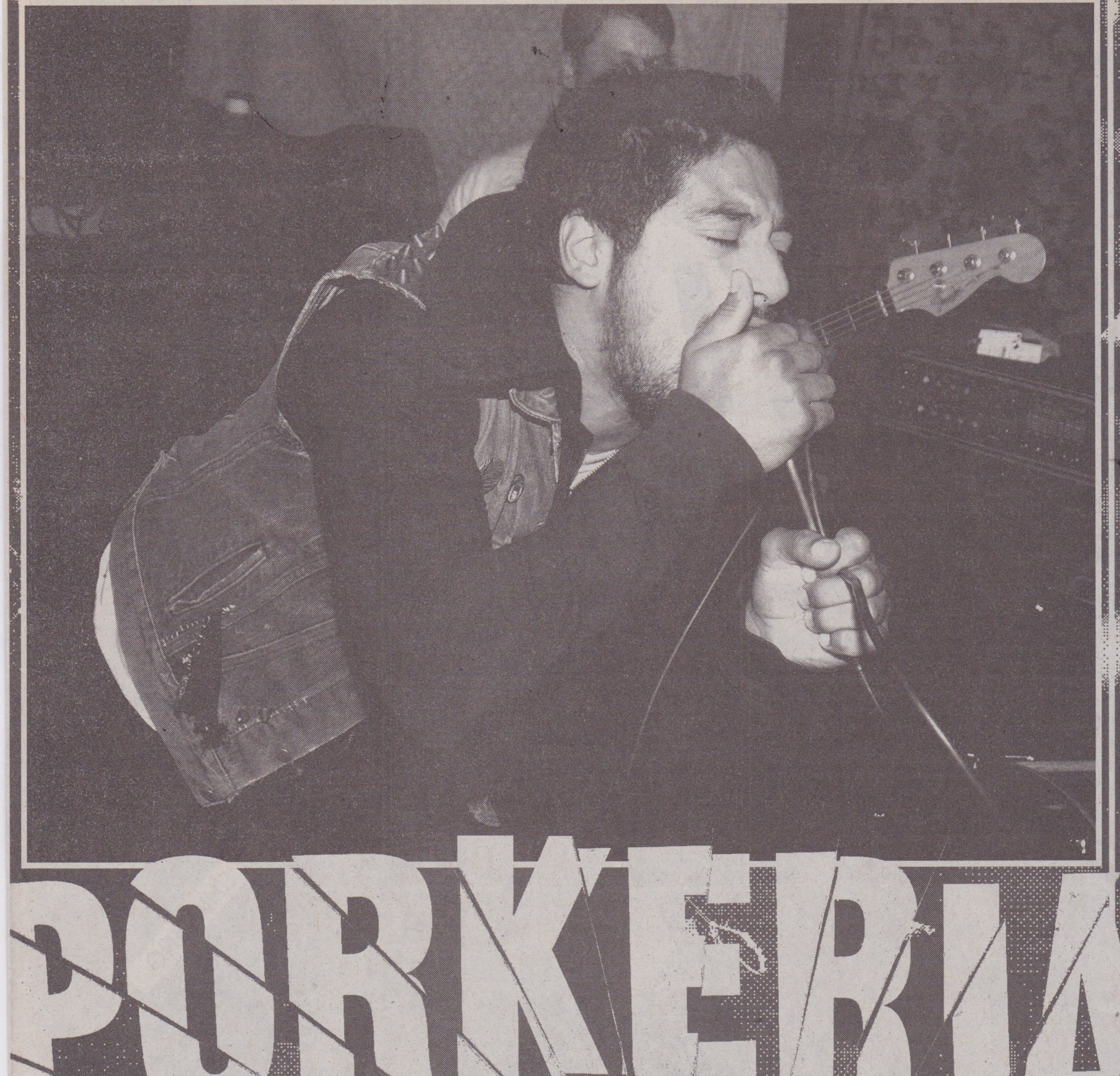


PORKERIA

From the small town of McAllen, Texas, Porkeria has been fucking shit up with their style of D-beat leaning hardcore punk tinged with injections of Scandinavian sound, creating fury and passion you will not soon forget. Touring on their *La Mierda De Siempre* LP this summer, we were fortunate enough to see them in action and trap them in the *MRR* compound for a talk.

Interview by Layla and Mariam. Photos by Murray Bowles

MRR: Hey readers! This is Porkeria, from McAllen, Texas! Would you like to introduce yourselves and tell us what you do in the band, please?
Enok: Enok, vocals.
Omar: Omar, drums.
Al: I'm Al, I play guitar.
Jaime: I'm Jaime, I play bass.

MRR: You guys are coming toward the end of an epic US tour.
Enok: It was fun.
Al: Pretty epic.

MRR: What was the craziest show that you played?
Enok: Boston, Fourth of July.
Jaime: Boston and Gainesville. Boston Fourth of July, just American madness. And Gainesville was just fucking fun.

MRR: Did you play with any rad bands?
Al: The Post Teens from Gainesville, I think we all agree on that one.
All: Yeah.
Omar: For sure, number one.

MRR: What were they like?
Omar: They remind me a lot of the Marked Men, but abrasive and, like, high energy. Also, some other honorable mentions are Putrida and Deformity in New York, Perdition, Kromosom, Mauser, Chaos Destroy in Baltimore, Cemetary and Population in Chicago, Hysterics and Crude Thought in Olympia, and Culture Kids.

MRR: Sounds Cool. Wait, you guys were in Boston for Fourth of July? How was the reception?
Jaime: I think we got there and everyone was already like pretty wasted and just throwing fireworks at each other the whole time, even in the basement, while the show was going on.
Al: We pulled up and they were like, shooting shit across at each other already outside.
Jaime: Yeah, roman candles and shit like that.
Omar: This one dude pulled up in his car with the sun roof open and they had those fucking cannons—
Enok: Like artillery shells, you know?
Omar: —shooting out across the street from the sunroof.
Jaime: Dude, that guy shot one into the crowd after that. That guy was gnarly. This guy's cymbal bag caught fire.

MRR: Another day in the life… So you guys are touring on this LP right?
Al: Yeah. Yes.

MRR: This is your new LP. Would you like to tell us a little bit about it?
Al: Well, it took us a good while to bring it out. I mean for the most part the songs on there are all fairly old. We had a demo tape about two years ago, I think.
Enok: Two years ago. So it's like the demo tape plus, new recordings.
Al: New recordings of the same songs and a few new songs.

MRR: You guys have been around for about two years?
Al: Probably like three or four, just about.
Enok: Three or—But we've been changing bass players for a long time.
Al: Yeah.

MRR: It's like Spinal Tap.
Jaime: Oh damn. Lucky number five.

MRR: So, what made you guys want to play music together. Were you in bands before? Did you already know each other?
Enok: Yeah, where we live its real small. There aren't a lot of people doing punk or doing anything, interesting at all. So when you find individuals that you can collaborate with in some way and interact with in some cool way…

MRR: You're down for life.
Enok: Yeah, exactly. Like these guys have been playing music in different punk bands for, what, I don't know, fifteen years or some shit.
Jaime: Well, that's a little long, I think.
Enok: Ten years?
Jaime: Maybe like eight.
Al: Well, you are old.
Jaime: I'm old, I'm the oldest dude in the band.

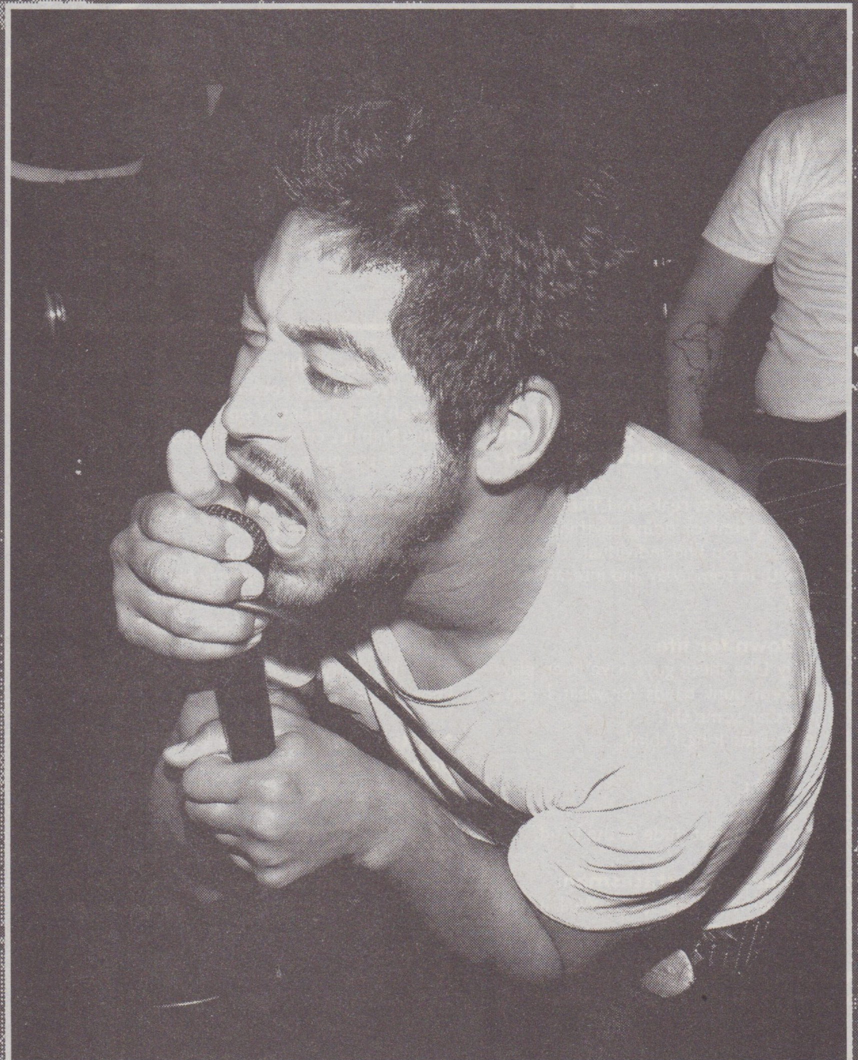
MRR: You're the senior statesman.
Jaime: Yeah. Den mother, so to speak. Well, just in age, you know what I mean?

MRR: I was gonna say that from the looks of these guys, you gotta keep them off the booze, huh?
Jaime: Well, I gotta keep myself off the booze.
Al: Yeah it's completely opposite.
Jaime: Nah, it's cool. These dudes are rad. I'm grateful for these guys.

MRR: So, what's it like growing up in a small place like that?
Enok: I grew up in Monterrey, Mexico. It's a good size city, you know. It's pretty big.
Al: For me, growing up in a small town just seems normal. Everything out here seems fucking crazy to me, so.
Jaime: It's shitty, it's small. There ain't shit to do, you know what I mean?

MRR: Yeah, you have to make shit happen.
Enok: Yeah, exactly. That's the hardest part, you know?

MRR: What's the scene like down there? Are there bands that you like? Or do you have to travel outside of your city to play.
All: No, no.
Enok: We can play there —There are local bands. Right now there's a wave of power pop, pop punk



and shit like that.
Al: Weird hipster shit.
Enok: Yeah.

MRR: Anything especially good right now, anything that you are into?
Enok: Ohhh...

MRR: Hmm...
Enok: Yeah, I have a lot of great friends and they have great bands and… I don't know—
Omar: There aren't a lot of hardcore bands right now.
Enok: Yeah there's not a lot of hardcore punk, and I love that shit. A little bit more than mellow shit, you know?

MRR: So would you say, it's a good place for touring bands to try to come through?
Omar: Definitely, yeah.
Enok: Yeah. There is a lot of bands that come through because, they go to Mexico and we are on the way, you know? So we are like a stepping-stone—they play McAllen and then keep going.
Omar: Like if they're on tour on their way to Mexico, or the way back from Mexico, they stop in McAllen just because it's conveniently on the way to San Antonio or Austin. But now we've been working really hard to put McAllen on the DIY network map, you know. Like if you're touring Texas or you're just touring the US, not even going to Mexico at all, you'll make the five hour drive to McAllen, and have a good show.
Enok: The shows will be great. Like I said, it's a small community and when there's something going on everyone comes out.
Jaime: Plus you get Taco Palenque afterwards.
Enok: Oh god.
Omar: Taco P!
Enok: They [Taco Palenque] should pay you for that shit [free advertising], you know? Tacos for life. Whole tour.

MRR: Well, we punks do love food. So, who should touring bands contact?
Jaime: Touring bands can contact us.
Al: Yeah, these guys fuckin' throw shows and shit.
Jaime: Under, the label email, Adelante Discos.

MRR: Did you guys put out both the records? Both labels are you?
Jaime: Mm-hmm.

MRR: So, who's Adelante?
Al: Omar's Adelante.
Omar: And he's Valle Miseria.

MRR: So when you guys were deciding to put out this record, were you approached by other labels, or did you approach other labels?
Enok: No.
Omar: No.

MRR: You just like were like, fuck it, we're doing it ourselves?
Al: We wanted to do it ourselves.
Omar: It was one of those things — we started this band so we could put out our records ourselves.
Enok: We're not known at all, so I don't think any other label was even aware that we were around, you know? So I don't think anyone was interested. Plus, we weren't interested in letting other people do our shit.

MRR: It's DIY, it's what punk's all about.
Enok: I mean, if we can do it ourselves, why the fuck are we gonna rely on someone else?
Omar: And the labels are small too. They kind of just really serve to put out bands that we're in. You know what I mean?
Enok: Or our friends.
Omar: Yeah, good friends of ours.
Enok: So far he's been releasing more shit than I have, you know?

MRR: So how did you guys get into punk, how did you discover it? Being from McAllen, what were you exposed to first?

Omar: Well, typical stuff that everyone is exposed to first, you know what I mean? My roots are kind of metal, in a weird way.
Al: Yeah, fuck yeah.
Omar: Then it was stuff like Green Day, Descendents, Operation Ivy… And then from there just went on.

MRR: How did you discover DIY punk?
Omar: Just hanging out. Friends of ours in McAllen who were buying records and stuff like that. Who were already listening to DIY punk. That's how I started.
Enok: For me, growing up in Mexico, you get exposed to a lot of South American punk and Spanish punk. Not really like anything like Scandinavian or fucking American punk. People seem more attached to Spanish, you know? Like more attached to DIY, real radical anarchist stuff.

MRR: So it's inherently more political.
Enok: Yeah more political than just musical. So in Mexico, the first [DIY punk] bands I learned about were typical ones, like Massacre 68, Histeria…all that shit. Sedicion. And of course, from Spain—RIP, Eskorbuto, and all that. There were always a lot of bands from South America too. But I was not really exposed to any American punk until I came to the US and I started hanging out with more people and listening to more stuff.

MRR: Did that influence you to sing in Spanish?
Enok: I don't think I can sing fast enough in English and I don't think I can articulate very well—I don't think I can. I don't like not being able to say what I mean, so I'd rather express something in Spanish. It's easier for me.

MRR: Does your language choice have something to do with the audience that you're speaking to?
Enok: Not really, because even though we're in the [Texas] valley, which is right across the border, not a lot of people speak Spanish. They speak a mix of both—like Spanglish or Tex-Mex or something—so it's not like everyone speaks complete or correct Spanish. I think it's more like a personal choice, more than trying to project something to someone.

MRR: What's has been the response? Has your language choice or being all Latino ever been an issue or discussed? Has being an all Latino band served as a positive or negative throughout your tour or since you've been a band.
Enok: So far I think everyone just looks at us like we're really just people, it's not like they come at you with a connection to being Latino. They're just really cool and talk to us like any other punk. I think we get weird shit from people outside the punk scene. Like weird looks, comments or whatever the fuck, but inside the DIY punk scene, everything's been pretty smooth so far.
Omar: Yeah. A lot of punk bands that sing in Spanish are getting a lot of like attention right now—more recently, as in the past few years or so. I don't think we've gotten any positive or negative shit, you know?
Enok: I just get people asking, "Was that Spanish?" And I'm like, "yeah."
Jaime: "The whole thing was in Spanish? Oh, that's fuckin' cool."
Enok: Yeah, that's awesome.
Al: That dude Billy was totally stoked that we sang in Spanish, though. In, where was it?
Omar: Oh, in Minot, North Dakota?
Al: No, not Minot. Fuckin'—
Omar: Portland?
Al: That pizza place where we played at?
Omar: Oh, Ben.
Al: No, Billy, The other one. The one from fuckin' Bikini Kill?

MRR: Billy Karren.
Al: Yeah, he was totally stoked on that. He was like "You guys sing in Spanish, that's fuckin' amazing. Some people try to sing in English from like fuckin' Finland and they sound like shit!" And I was like, "OK…"
Enok: What does that mean? The Japanese are doing fine in English.

MRR: Can you tell us about your dedication to a friend in your LP.
Al: Yeah. [Crack] was our bass player, our most recent bass player. We were out drinking one night and he and his girlfriend passed away. It was a car crash. It sucks.

MRR: That's horrible.
Al: Yeah. After that happened it took us a while to even think about starting up again… Luckily we did and we kept going and we put out an album.
Omar: We had already had a couple bass players and when Crack came along, it was awesome. It felt like, "this is set in stone." So then we finally got some momentum going, we were gonna…
Enok: And then fuckin' life takes a shit on you, you know?
Omar: We would have recorded all these songs together, so, we dedicated it to him and his girlfriend.
Enok: But now we have Jaime and we can't complain at all. It's just horrible what happened, but it's

part of life, you know? But I'm glad we kept going instead of quitting, because we were thinking about leaving that project in the past. But it happened, so it's cool.
Jaime: I don't think he'd have wanted you dudes to stop regardless.
Enok: Yeah, that's what I was thinking. I'm pretty sure he would say, "Come on dude, fuckin' just keep going" and shit like that, you know?
Omar: And he loved the band before he was in it.
Enok: Yeah, he was a fan.
Al: It was pretty funny. [laughter]
Enok: Yeah, he liked the band a lot before he started playing with us. I didn't even know. I was like, "For real? You like it?" and he was like, "Fuck yeah, it's awesome." I was like, "alright."
Al: Yeah, he would tell me stupid shit, like, fuckin', "I'm super stoked to finally be in a band with you," and all this shit. I didn't know what to say. Fuckin' weird shit. But, he was a fuckin' cool guy. [laughter]

MRR: That's really cool though. That's the best thing about punk, the audience can be in the band, you know? It stops hero worship in its tracks, 'cos you realize that anyone can do this.
Enok: Yeah, it's awesome.

MRR: What are your plans for the future?
Omar: Um, we have another 7" coming out soon I think.

MRR: Are you guys putting it out yourselves again?
Enok: Yeah.

MRR: Cool.
Enok: I think this time he's going to do it himself instead of me helping him. [laughter]
Omar: And then hopefully then maybe a split and then I think there's like plans next year to try to go to Europe.
Al: Yeah. We got invited by Mundo Muerto to go on tour and do Europe.

MRR: Dude that'll be awesome.
Enok: Oh, They're going with us? [laughter] Again? Those bastards… [laughter]
Al: Son of a bitch, not again! [laughter]
Omar: After our EP, we plan to put out a split with them so we can have that ready for the tour.

MRR: That's great. How was touring with them?
Omar: Great.
Enok: Fucking funny, like—
Al: A lot of shit talking between each other. So it was very fun.
Jaime: I love it. I've never heard so many fuckin' dick jokes in my entire life. It's ridiculous.

MRR: You haven't hung around here enough.
[Laughter]
Al: I think it was like fifteen days or sixteen days?
Jaime: I feel bad for Mapex [the driver on tour], got the worst end of it all. Mapex got ragged on every day.
Enok: Nah, but he's an asshole too. Most of the time he always gives it back to whoever said it.
Jaime: He was pretty much breaking down towards the end and couldn't take it. In fuckin' Dayton he walked in while everybody was in a kitchen after like drinking beer and eating pizza. Dude was just trying to get a slice of pizza and everybody just verbally destroyed him. He stood there, he walked away and he was sitting on the couch with a sleeping bag like… [laughter]
Jaime: Like, "I don't even want to be here. I'm doing you guys a favor."
Enok: Like he coulda been touring with fucking indie bands—
Jaime: Making a shit load of money—
Enok: Ah, just kidding. He's cool. He's punk. [laughter]
Jaime: Yeah, he's the shit but in fuckin' Dayton he was fucking ultra-over it.

MRR: So where else are you going after this?
Omar: We are going all the way down the coast.
Al: yeah, we've got like a week-and-a-half or so to go.

MRR: So you're just touring now by yourselves? You—
Al: yeah, we're just by ourselves. Yeah unfortunately like most of the shows are with other touring bands so that's kind of like—
Enok: I mean it's cool to have a great crowd and have a, fuckin' play with great bands. That's a—

MRR: Sounds like the tour's been really good.
Enok: Yeah, it's been great. Well, don't know because I've never toured before, so I don't know…

MRR: This is your first tour? Awesome.
Enok: Yeah. So I don't know how great it is. I cannot compare it to any other experiences in the past.
Omar: Well we did two weeks with Salted City in Mexico about two months ago.

MRR: How was that?
Enok: That was awesome. It was fun as fuck. But we were missing the bass player because of family problems so he couldn't go.
Al: So Jason from Salted City ended up learning most of our songs on the way to San Luis and we just kind of like winged it from there.
Enok: Yeah, so thanks a lot for that. 'Cos he's awesome too, I mean the whole band is.

MRR: Where did you guys play in Mexico?
Enok: We played in Mexico City, Toluca, Queretaro, Guadalajara—Toluca Mosh!

MRR: Yeah!
Omar: Manzanillo
Enok: Ah, Manzanillo, too. Monterey.
Al: Yeah, a couple other places. I don't remember—
Omar: And Leon.

MRR: How were the shows?
Enok: Every show had its own little fucking craziness.
Al: They had their own characters.
Enok: Every city had its own character, crazy personality that'd be hanging out with us and shit.
Omar: Yeah, we met Juan Brujo's brother. [laughter]
All: Ahhhhhhhhhh!!!
Enok: That's fucking bullshit.

MRR: From Brujeria!? Shut up.
Enok: That's what he said!
Omar: So he said…
Enok: He had an awesome like chest piece that said Brujeria with a fucking demon and shit, and he was craaazy. He got to the show bleeding. He got to the show and he had been stabbed in the leg like before the show because he didn't want to…
Al: Give someone like money for a fuckin' beer…
Enok: So he got stabbed and he walked to the show. He was there at the show and fucking drinking rubbing alcohol with us—
Omar: Which he didn't tell us at first. [laughter]
Enok: He didn't say it was fucking rubbing alcohol. He was just like, this—
Al: "This is what Pancho Villa used to drink so drink some."

MRR: Well, how can you say no to that?
Al: I was like, "Oh, OK," and I thought, "oh, it tastes like he mixed a lot of fucking tequilas and fucking vodka together."
Omar: No—rubbing alcohol.

MRR: Pancho Villa and fuckin' Jim Jones.
Omar: I knew it immediately. I took a sip and I was like, "that's fucking rubbing alcohol!"
Enok: I drank a whole fucking cup with him and until I saw him pulling rubbing alcohol out of his pocket. He was like, "oh, want more?" "No!"
Omar: Afterwards we go over to the house where we are staying to drink some beers with people. I hear someone say that there is a room filled with empty bottles of rubbing alcohol from partying the night before.
Enok: And there are people coming out of the room with cups and drinking whatever the fuck. I thought it was liquor but I went inside the room and there were rubbing alcohol bottles laying everywhere. I was like, "oh shit…" Yeah, every show had its own crazy shit. It was hella fun. The food was great of course—the best part of the whole fuckin' tour!
Omar: Yeah, food tour.
Al: The guys from Salted City actually have some badass video of like, that dude in that house, with all of us dancing together and people standing on top of his stomach while he fuckin' drinks a 40.
Enok: He forced someone to stand on his fucking stomach
Al: "Stand on my stomach while I drink this 40."

MRR: It's like every night at Maximum.
Enok: So, can we stay here tonight? Rubbing alcohol time!

MRR: Are you guys playing in SF again?
Omar: After here is San Jose and then we just make our way down to LA.
Al: Yeah we go to San Jose tonight.
Omar: With Bloody Phoenix, I think it's their second show on tour, and Human Waste and Bird.
Enok: Bird? [sings] The Bird-bird-bird, the bird is the—
Omar: I don't know. I could be wrong. But I know its Bloody Phoenix for sure. Then LA, San Diego and Arizona and...

MRR: So what is the writing process of the band? How do you come up with lyrics and music?
Enok: These guys come up with the music first. Usually it's these two guys—drummer and the guitar player who make the music. And then I just write on top of that. The lyrics reflect however I feel that day. [laughs] I'm an unstable person, so are the lyrics and so is the process. We can't say they're really "political." I just try to make it straight to the point, catchy and punk as fuck. And they're about personal issues and about everyday problems. But there are also more general songs, like the typical punk war song and shit like that.
Omar: Some songs are about friendship too, some pretty positive songs in here too.
Enok: Yeah. Like I said, it depends like how I woke up that day and…
MRR: How much rubbing alcohol you drank the night before.
Enok: Yeah. Or if I was listening to Boom Boom Kid or fucking Discharge and— [laughter]

MRR: Like you said, they seem inherently political but with a personal take as opposed to being like, "This is the issue."
Enok: Yeah. I think as the band has progressed the lyrics have gotten a little bit more complex.
Omar: A little bit more in structure, in theme…
Enok: Yeah, when the band started, we were a little bit slower. I guess I had a lot of Discharge on my mind—real simple lyrics.
Omar: It matched the music at the time. But the music has progressed—
Enok: But I think we've been making more intricate songs than in the past, so the lyrics also have been changing.

MRR: So you've been writing with your new bass player? How has that changed the music?
Omar: Yeah, I think not so much stylistically.
Jaime: I think we all have our different approaches.
Al: We're all pretty different in regards to style.
Enok: And musical tastes.

MRR: So you are meeting in the middle somewhere coming from different perspectives?
Omar: Yeah, I don't think we're going to completely stray from the sound on the LP, but we will try different things.
Enok: We all have different personalities and ideologies, likes and dislikes in music—but all of that comes together with our music, which sounds to me like hardcore punk. I guess it may sound different to others—who listens to it and how they want to take it.
Jaime: It's open to interpretation, I suppose.

MRR: So your next record's going to sound like Paralysis Permanente—
All: No, no [laughter]
Enok: No way. I don't think we're going to change the style at all.
Omar: No, the style's not gonna change.
Al: No dude, that's exactly what I'm going for.

MRR: So…you know there's another band called Porkeria? Are you guys gonna challenge them to a death match?
[laughter]
Enok: There's one from Spain that's called something like Porkeria T. And there's another band from Mexico that I just found.
Al: There's a couple.

MRR: So, Porkeria fest, maybe?
[laughter]
Enok: Well, I think the band from Spain is done and the guys from Mexico don't have any releases yet.

MRR: So you guys are the victors! On top!
Enok: Well, I mean for right now…for right now and probably ten years later…
Jaime: Until some better Porkeria band comes out.
Omar: I'm down for a death match. [laughter]

MRR: My money's on you guys.
Enok: I haven't even heard the band from Spain. I don't even know what they sound like, but I'm pretty sure they're good and punk. Because, it's from Spain, brah, come on. [laughter] No, No…not everything that comes…

MRR: That's actually why I asked the language question. You had said that Spanish language bands are getting a lot of attention lately. Sort of how Japanese bands had started getting a lot attention some years back. Do you think people approach you like, "Hey! That's that Mexican band!"
Omar: Yeah, I'd be lying if I said it didn't help, because that's what's getting attention right now. I mean, we are all Latino punks and we are singing in Spanish.
Enok: That shit has gotten real popular lately, you know.
Omar: We didn't start this band with that intention or because Spanish language bands are popular. Like I said, there aren't a lot of people who play in bands back where we're from and Enok used to sing in another band called El Sistema Nos Controla. It was so moving and his stage presence—I was like "We gotta start a band." That's what started this band.
Enok: Even before I knew about a lot of American hardcore punk, I always sang in Spanish because it is my primary language. I didn't really speak English, so when I started the other band the lyrics were in Spanish just because that was the only thing I could do, you know? The only thing I could speak. So I kept just going with it because I don't like Eng-

lish. But that's because I don't know how to say my ideas, express myself, you know? I can't speak it so good.

MRR: That's understandable, because that is your voice. I'm leading here, but that's the wonderful thing about being bilingual—is that you can choose. You are more comfortable speaking in Spanish, but if someone asks you what your lyrics mean you can still explain it to a non-Spanish speaker...
Enok: Yeah.
Al: We provided really awesome translations in the record if you have any questions.
Omar: That's the funny thing about Language, too. The translations are just so… so simplistic; it takes away from that passion you can hear, well what I can hear, behind the lyrics. And in English it's very like, "dut-dut-dut, dut-dut-dut." I don't know, just kind of like… kind of like… Honestly, kind of boring.
Enok: I think it depends on who sings it. And what they say and the fucking energy put out, you know?
Al: Everything sounds better in Spanish…
[laughter]

MRR: Speak Spanish or die?
Omar: Exactly [laughter]
Enok: Nah, nah. [laughs] I wouldn't say that ever. It's just, like, speak whatever you can, you know? Do whatever you can. Don't try to be like something else, something you're not just 'cos you're following a trend. You do it because you want to and you can, and that's the only thing you can do. It's the only thing I could do at the time and I'm not gonna start singing in English.

MRR: But people must approach you wanting to know what you are singing about because that passion is transmitted. You guys are awesome live, "Mariam Bastani reporting for *MRR*. Awesome live." Do you find that people approach you guys and are like, "Holy shit! What was that?!"
All: Thanks.
Enok: Yeah, I think so?
Omar: I think we are approached more so at a live performance with inquiries about what we're singing about.
Enok: I get people asking, "What are you guys singing about?" and stuff like that. I tell people that if they have questions what we're saying just ask me. I don't want them to think that we're fucking saying anything like racist. But I understand they don't know what I'm singing, so they are going to ask. They contact me and I always tell people they can ask me what I'm saying and what the songs are about, you know? There are translations on the record, but if they cannot buy it they can just ask me. But yeah, I get people approaching us, asking us what I am singing about.
Al: We've been getting a lot of compliments, I guess, if you can say, throughout this tour. So…Cool.

MRR: You got a good review in *Maximum*. I don't know if you guys saw it.
Al: Yeah.
Enok: I don't know who did the review.
MRR: It's this kid Kevin who actually just broke his leg at the Limp Wrist show.
Enok: Oh, shit…

MRR: Pit injury. He's a picky man. And he was like, "Holy shit, this is so good!"
Jaime: Well, thanks to him and hope he feels better.

Al: We'll send him a Christmas card this year.

MRR: It'll be pictures of you guys with rubbing alcohol and smiling.
Al: Merry Christmas. Naked.
Jaime: Ducking fire works.

MRR: Bag of wine. As baby Jesus.
Jaime: That'd be awesome. Totally down with it.

MRR: Is there anything else you guys want to say?
Omar: Thanks to Mundo Muerto for riding with us half way and everyone who's helped us out with shows.
Enok: Remind other bands that McAllen's there and they can go and stop by a really DIY punk scene. It's a small scene but there's a lot of stuff happening right now. There are a lot of people who are really enthusiastic about it and they go out to shows and stuff, so. Remember that scene in Texas.

MRR: A scene report would be pretty cool. You guys should do it. Let us know what's happening.
Omar: It'd be great to have done the scene report about three years ago. Now, it's like just us…

MRR: There's no more stuff that you're into?
Omar: It's just more pop punk stuff, but it's really good. There are a lot of really good pop punk bands that are playing there now. They're good friends of ours.

MRR: Mariam and I are not really pop punk people either. I mean like I think it's got value in the scene. You know, it's cool it exists. I'd rather listen to Eskobuto, you know?
Omar: I was thinking about doing one, but I wouldn't be able to write one and be as enthusiastic as I would have been two or three years ago. And include those bands also. I couldn't do it now. Jaime should do it.
Jaime: Have to learn how to write first… [laughter]

Enok: Shout out to my friend Eric from McAllen. He's been doing a lot of punk for many many years, you know?

MRR: What's his name?
Enok: Eric. And he's been doing a lot of punk in many bands, for many years since he was like sixteen or some shit like that in McAllen.
Al: He played in BSA with these guys.
Enok: When I met him I learned a lot. I heard a lot of new bands, hanging out with him. And he's one of the active punks in the community doing a lot of music and playing in many bands. So it's kind of cool to keep it alive in McAllen, you know, it's a small town.

MRR: I didn't know you guys were in BSA.
Enok: I wasn't, Omar was.

MRR: Thanks for stopping by Porkeria! Good luck on the rest of your tour. You guys are gonna fucking kill. Are you guys going to go to Amoeba?
Al: I think we've been there like ten times.
Enok: I don't want to go to any more record stores anymore. I'm broke as fuck.
Al: I'm over the fucking records already.
Omar: We went to two different Amoebas actually.

MRR: There's not the same shit in each. There's another one in LA.
Enok: I'm broke! I'm going to pawn some shit on the way over.
Jaime: We found those video games, remember. We gotta pawn them.

MRR: Start selling instruments. Plasma. Autographs.
Omar: We're gonna start selling those fucking records to get other records.

For more info about this band or setting up a McAllen, Texas show email: adelantediscos@gmail.com

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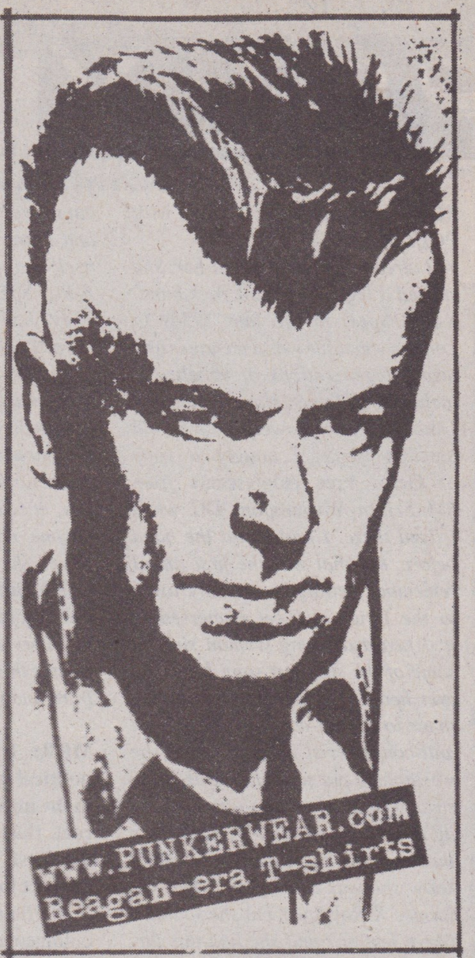

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POLY STYRENE

ROCK AGAINST RACISM with POLY STYRENE!

You already know all about her. She started a legendary punk rock band, X-Ray Spex, in the late 1970s in London when she was a teenager and inspired generations of vocalists—including Kathleen Hanna and Beth Ditto—with her powerful voice and timeless lyrics. I bought a copy of Germ Free Adolescents from SMASH in Washington, DC when I lived there. I had heard the band before, but that was the first time I remember getting to actually listen to the lyrics and get immersed in it. I heard a young woman singing some of the sharpest song lyrics I'd ever heard. Her perspective seemed to me to be anti-capitalist or at least anti-consumerist in nature, and she was able to put suitable words to the strangeness of post-modern life in all of its false sterility. I didn't know that she was half-Black and I didn't know she was a teenager when she formed X-Ray Spex, but she sounded like a feminist and she had this far-out way of thinking about her reality and I was really into it. The music itself was ahead of its time, too. X-Ray Spex was a new wave band. They had a saxophonist named Lora Logic, they had a futuristic feel and you could tell they listened to as much reggae and ska as they did rock'n'roll. Poly Styrene was the mouthpiece and formed the aesthetic for her band and till this day, it's hard for me to think of anyone else who's done it better since. She was indeed the captain of the Brown Underground, and I feel lucky to have gotten the chance to interview her before she died earlier this year.

Intro and interview by Osa Atoe

MRR: Briefly, what were the political circumstances in society, in the music industry and in punk rock that lead to the creation of the first Rock Against Racism concert in 1976?

In 1976 punk rock was considered outrageous and a dangerous youth movement by the Establishment. The music industry was shaken up by punk rock music and racism was rearing its ugly head with fascist right wing political groups calling for the repatriation of all foreigners. Rock Against Racism came along as a breath of fresh air and many punk rock bands played at their events including X-Ray Spex.

MRR: Did you or any friends of yours suffer any attacks as a punk or person of color during that time?

Some of my friends were attacked for being punk rockers. I never was physically attacked, but I got some negative press as a punk rocker and some verbal abuse on the street for my skin tone.

MRR: Who were the main organizers of Rock Against Racism and are they the same group that organized Rock Against Racism's 30th Anniversary show?

I remember a guy called Red Saunders as being one of the main organizers and was still involved with the Anniversary show 30 years later.

MRR: How did it feel to be a part of this event? What was the audience like? Any favorite moments?

It was a great historical event it felt really great to be up there fighting with music against racism. I remember revealing a shaved head to the audience I shaved my hair off in sympathy for Jewish women who were raped in concentration camps during the Second World War.

MRR: What was your involvement in punk outside of X-Ray Spex?

I just hung out at most early punk rock shows and met lots of other punk band members.

MRR: What was your social life like at the time that X-Ray Spex started? What types of people did you hang around, or were you mostly a loner? Where, if it all, did you find community?

I had a great social life I was invited to lots of parties and gigs I hung out with a girl called Mad Mary and we lived just off the Kings Road in Chelsea we knew lots of people in the neighborhood.

MRR: I'm assuming the punk scene then was predominantly white, just like most punk scenes are now. Did that ever bother you at the time? Did you ever feel isolated on the basis of race? Why or why not?

Yes, that is true, but I never felt isolated

X-Ray Spex Take Shot at U.S.

Bob Messineo

Poly Styrene caught in the act of being herself at CBGBs. Need we say more?

because of race as I had grown up in a mostly white family, I was aware that I looked a bit different but I thought that made me more exotic and I grew up in a predominately Afro-Caribbean neighborhood so felt at home in any racial situation.

MRR: How did you find out about punk rock in the first place?

Through a friend called Jon Savage who latter wrote the book *England's Dreaming*. Jon took me to the Roxy and to see the Clash in my local Town Hall.

MRR: It can be easy for girls and young women to fall prey to all of the marketing geared toward us. What made you so critical of consumerism at such a young age?

I don't think I was that critical but just wrote songs about consumerism as I felt society expected girls to look and behave in a certain way that seemed a bit corny, especially in marketing girl orientated products.

MRR People often confuse fashion with consumerism, but you can definitely be fashionable in a DIY sense without being a rabid shopper. What inspired the one-of-a-kind fashion you sported as the lead singer of X-Ray Spex?

I think I was inspired to be creative with clothes and fashion due to having a low budget available to me. I also used to make jewelry out of sink chain and plastic tubing from the DIY store as I thought it was a fun thing to do and it looked quite futuristic.

MRR: What personal experiences inspired the lyrics in the song "Identity"?

I was inspired to write "Identity" after seeing a teenage girl called Tracey who was a sales assistant for Vivienne Westwood slashing her wrist in the Ladies toilets at the Roxy Club in Covent Garden. Sadly, Tracey later died of a drug overdose.

MRR: I always assumed the song was about your own experience as a woman or mixed race person in society or in punk rock. What do you think the issue of identity had to do with Tracey's attempted suicide?

No, "Identity" wasn't a personal angst song, but Tracey brought it home to me as a young woman trying to be cool playing around with drugs and identifying with the dark side of life rather than the positives that she could have identified with. I thought it was a tragedy that here was this beautiful young girl who was so desperate to be a punk and fit into a subculture that she would go to any lengths and even public displays of self-harm.

MRR: "Oh Bondage, Up Yours!" has become somewhat of a feminist punk rock anthem. Did you identify as a feminist at the time the song was written? Do you now? Why or why not?

At the time of "Oh Bondage Up Yours!" I didn't think I was a feminist I didn't think it mattered what sex you were, but as I have got older I realize there are a lot of injustices in society and women bare the brunt of some of them. I wouldn't call myself an active feminist but I do believe in equal rights for women as women still earn less money in the work place than their male counterparts here in the UK.

MRR: I was a bit surprised at the way you were portrayed in Don Letts' book *Culture Clash: Dread Meets Punk Rockers*. Have you read his book? If so, I wanted to give you a chance to respond to that portrayal if you wish.

I haven't read Don's book so have no idea how I was portrayed.

MRR: How did it feel to be part of Rock Against Racism's 30th anniversary concert, especially having been a part of the first one?

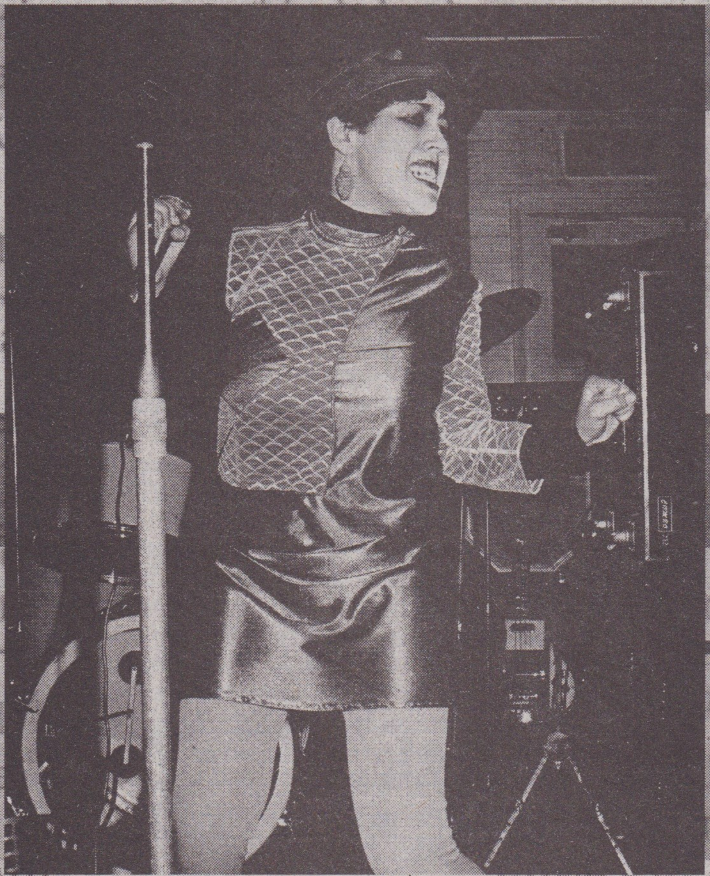
It was great to be part of the 30th anniversary of Rock Against Racism, I was very surprised how many people knew the words to "Oh Bondage, Up Yours!" I really wasn't expecting that as I sang it so long ago.

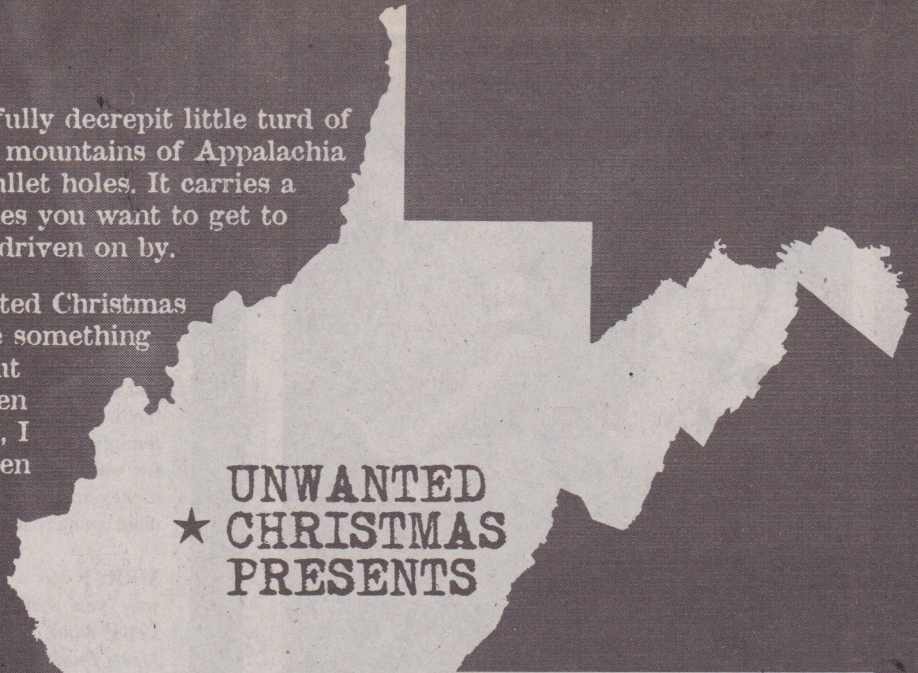
MRR: How do you feel about the way racism has changed since 1976, or do you think it has? You can speak from personal experience, or about society in general, or both.

I think it has changed tremendously; you have a dual heritage President of the United States for one thing and we have a Afro-Caribbean female running for leadership of the Labor Party here in the UK. This would have been unimaginable in 1976. There are still racists that want all the immigrants to go back to their countries of origin, so there is still a way to go.

MRR: What are your current musical or artistic projects?

I have just finished a new album called *Generation Indigo*. I was collaborating with Youth from Killing Joke who was the producer and arranger. He was great to work with. It is a solo album as if I had done it as X-Ray Spex would have had to stick to a certain sound. I have also been co-writing a screenplay that is going to be sent a well-known producer in Hollywood.





UNWANTED ★ CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Charleston, West Virginia is a beautifully decrepit little turd of a city. It's buried within the forested mountains of Appalachia like a rusted out old Chevy full of bullet holes. It carries a bombed out time warp feel that makes you want to get to know the place, but I've always just driven on by.

When I first saw the cover to Unwanted Christmas Presents LP, I knew it was gonna be something good, and when I pulled the insert out of the sleeve and read the type-written dates, titles, geography and shit, well, I wanted to know more. Especially when the sound in the grooves was just as gloriously fucked and beautiful as Charleston itself.

Interview by K Failure

MRR: The Unwanted Christmas Presents album has recordings dating back to 1985. When did the band start and how did you originally meet Keith?

Jonathan: The band started in the fall of 1985. Keith and I were the remnants of another band called the Mad Daddys who had a raucous psychedelic garage sound. Keith formed the Mad Daddys with three other guys in the spring of 1985. They were all about twenty-one and played cover songs by the Cramps, and stuff like "Surfin' Bird," "Wild Thing," "Do It Clean," "Can't Find My Mind," and a few other classic rock songs that fit the garage mold.

The Mad Daddys played at the first area hardcore show which took place in Nitro, West Virginia, an industrial suburb of Charleston's Kanawha Valley. Th' Inbred, Solar Safari, and SteelNatCole were a few of the other bands on that bill. So right after that show, immediately offstage, Keith and the rest of the band decided to sack their bass player. Not sure why; likely the usual "personality and musical differences." Keith asked my brother to join them, who then recommended me, so I joined the Mad Daddys on bass and we practiced in my basement and played lots of shows in the spring and summer of 1985. We had a very dense, cacophonous sound that left people speechless, mad, angry, or overjoyed, or some combination of those. But when the drummer and guitarist left that fall to go back to college, Keith and I formed Unwanted Christmas Presents to keep working together.

Keith and I were already writing songs together in the Mad Daddys. I had written the tunes on bass and Keith added lyrics. The song "Industrial Death" was a recasting of a song we had with the Mad Daddys; it had been a stomping garage song with more "groovy" kind of lyrics, regular drums, and was originally called, appropriately enough, "Groove Tube Baby." So we recorded that as "Industrial Death." I recorded the instruments, and Keith put his vocal over top, and that was sort of a snapshot of how we wanted to sound, if we could muster up people to play.

Keith grew up in the same neighborhood as I, and was five years older than me. He and his older brother Kevin had been paper boys in the 'hood throughout the 1970s. In fact, Jennifer Garner (of *Alias*) and her sisters grew up in the house directly across the street from the Dunleavy's. Ms. Garner used to give Keith rides to the State College for a semester or two.

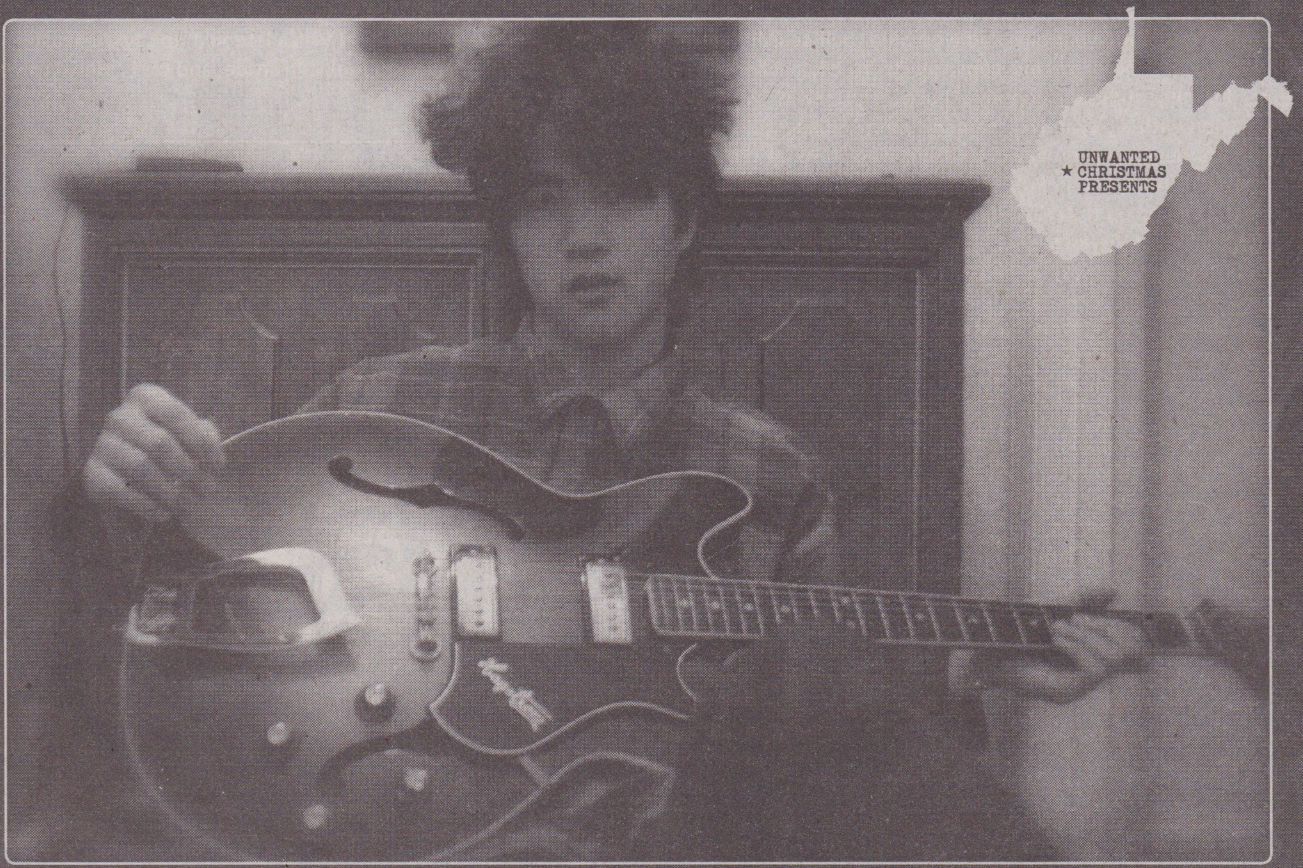
Anyways, it was several years later that I re-encountered Keith who was then back from having just quit or been thrown out of Marshall University, and was now seen at parties and hanging around my older brother's band, The Sea Monkeys. They were one of the first of the younger bands to be playing new wave/post-punk and playing out a lot in the summer of '84, either at parties, or at this place called the 11:59 Club, which was started in part by one of Charleston's very first punk/new wave groups, the Defectors. Keith would be at those shows dancing the "squirm" or the "squiggle" and he already had a rocker persona and was known to indulge in brews, herb, and psychedelics.

CHARLESTON

The next spring, my brother came home with a tape he had just made of Keith's new/first band, the Mad Daddys, practicing at someone's house downtown, and my brother said, "Keith's just got this natural, perfect rock and roll voice." And I heard the tape and agreed. I had been playing guitar since I was eight or nine, and had been in fledgling bands playing classic rock/new wave covers in junior high and early high school, so playing bass in the Mad Daddys was easy. I was fifteen going on sixteen and had my learner's permit, so I was good to go. If I had been any younger, I probably would have been disqualified.

MRR: Did you guys ever jam, play shows or record with any other collaborators?

We were always looking to add members for a full sound. We tried everyone we knew, but no one was right for it. We jammed with other scene makers onstage from time to time for certain songs or encores sets. And in 1988 in Morgantown we earnestly added a couple friends of ours— the bassist and drummer from the only Charleston hardcore band Further Thoughts, but the styles didn't really mesh, and we got bogged down in practicing tunes over and over, which was something Keith and I weren't into. We played one show with that lineup.



We toyed with the idea of adding two women to the band to balance out the energy, and one of Keith's dreams was to have an all-woman backing band for himself, ha-ha.

I don't remember how I decided to get a bass drum and just play it and guitar. The Flat Duo-Jets had just drums and guitars, so I knew that a stripped-down sound was viable to some degree. We sort of minimalized it further. There were old blues duos. Hasil Adkins was from Madison, not too far south from Charleston, and had re-emerged from obscurity around then with his one-man-band act. And there were bass-less bands like the Cramps already.

So we found the stripped-down format to be liberating despite its limitations. It was easy and quick with less hassle. And we liked seeing what results we could get with so little ingredients.

Later on, in 1989, we had a five-piece band called Death & Co., and Keith and I enjoyed having a full band again. And after I left town for a while, Keith had other bands and people he'd work with, but he would often end up berating his primitive musicians. He was very particular about sound levels and would sometimes do fifteen minute sound checks until it was perfect. The last thing he ever wanted was to be drowned out by all the other instruments.

MRR: What was the scene like in West Virginia at the time? What kinds of bands did you play with? Any notable names?

The Charleston HC scene didn't really get going until around 1985. Before that, there were a few years of punky new wave bands playing in bars downtown or at parties. Some of the old-timer hardcore characters, a handful of folks, had been to shows in major cities before that. And Morgantown, West Virginia (2.5 hours to the north) had a scene that got up and going one or two years before Charleston's. In Charleston, there were no bars booking the HC bands, so those shows took place anywhere there was an adequate supply of electrical power and an absence of the law.

It was very tight-knit and not giant by any means. Everyone knew each other to some extent. The first real HC shows in the area didn't take place until the spring of 1985, in Nitro.

Bongwater's Ann Magnuson, who grew up here, once commented that, "Charleston, culturally speaking, was five years behind the rest of the country," that its 1960s were like the '50s and its 1970s were like the '60s. And she was kind of right. But by the early 1980s, Charleston had cable television and VCRs like everyone else, so it kinda closed the gap, so we were only one to two years behind the times by 1985, and speeding up to being ahead of our time.

The first Charleston HC show was a band called Socialized Violence from Indiana. The show was in the alley/garage of a downtown furniture store. The bands played on the loading dock platform as a stage. We played that show as the Mad Daddys. And there was another band that played, Immoral Minority, who soon would morph into the one stalwart HC band in Charleston in 1986, called Further Thoughts. They sounded somewhat like the Circle Jerks. They actually went on a Midwest tour in the spring of '87 or so.

Charleston is two or three hours from Columbus, Lexington, and Pittsburgh, but not really on the road route, since there is no major city directly to the south. But a show booker or two would get bands that were traveling to and from Morgantown or Columbus to make a stop in Charleston. So '85-'86 was the heyday for that initial Charleston scene because of the steady flow of bands that came through. There was 76% Uncertain, Life Sentence, Psychodrama, Half Life, DRI, DOA, Dayglo Abortions, Government Issue, Fang, No Means No, the Vampire Lezbos (with original singer Rob), Crucial Youth, Social Unrest, The Detonators, Instigators, Nick Tokzik, Sand In The Face, PTL Klub, Justice League, Aggression, Scream, Boom & The Legion of Doom, and many others. The local bookers were seventeen to twenty-year-olds and would do their season and then move away, so there was no consistency. In '86, a Charlestonite home for the summer, Johnny "Puke" Hurt, was working in conjunction with a guy in NYC named Johnny Stiff to get bands to stop in Charleston every week, so there were tons of shows that summer. (GG Allin died in Puke's apartment several years later, the summer I moved up to NYC). There were a couple shows in bars in Huntington, West Virginia as well.

Keith had moved away to Florida during the spring of '86, and didn't get back 'til later that summer, so he missed a lot of those shows, but we played some at the end of the summer. The Mad Daddys even reformed for one of them. Our final show with the Mad Daddys was with a band called Third Force, from Topeka, Kansas.

Morgantown had a more established scene, where the Underground Railroad bar and Dry House all-ages space booked the more high-profile bands since it was an hour south of Pittsburgh and three hours from DC. I hitchhiked up to Mo town to see the Dead Kennedys in the fall of '85, and it was a very entertaining spectacle for a sixteen-year-old. Other bands that stopped in Morgantown included Black Flag, MDC, Butthole Surfers, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Circle Jerks, Die Kreuzen, Rhythm Pigs, Dead Milkmen, tons of SST bands, 7 Seconds, Beefeater, Screaming Mailboxes, Corrosion of Conformity, Upright Citizens, and scads of others. And along with Th'Inbred, there was a diverse local band scene made up of the steady flow of college kids, assorted dropouts, and young high schoolers.

MRR: What was the inspiration for the band? Were they any bands that influenced you guys? Did you feel what you were doing was a part of a greater kind of zeitgeist or movement within the punk/ DIY underground?

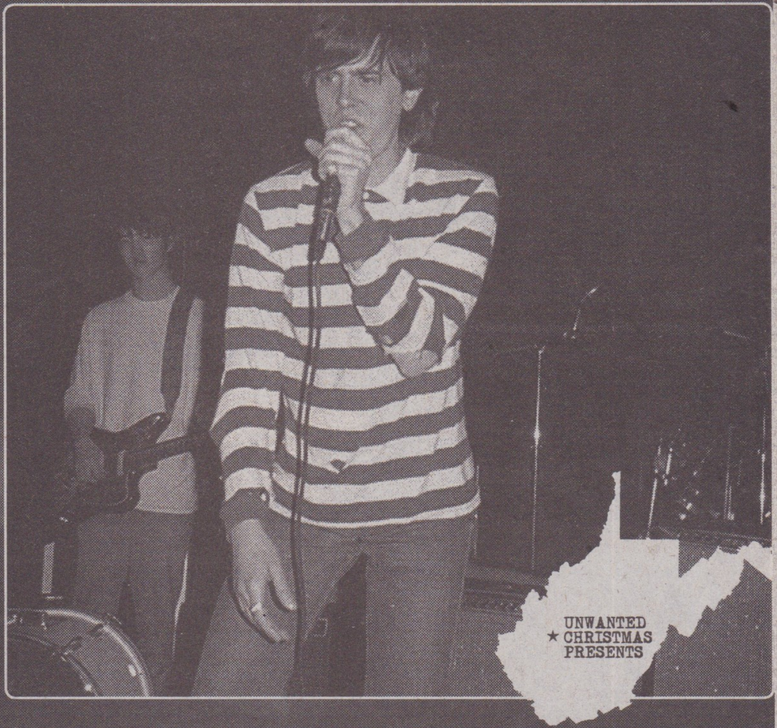
We grew out of a psychedelic garage band that had devolved almost out of existence. When my bass was stolen after the final Mad Daddys show, I started playing guitar a lot more again. The two-piece lineup was almost comically post-apocalyptic, as if the rest of the band had died of radiation poisoning or something.

Musically, Keith and I were into a lot of '60s rock, psych, the Ventures, Beatles, Stones, Dylan, Pink Floyd, Zombies, '50s rock and roll like Gene Vincent and Little Richard, soul and r&b, blues, and punk and hardcore like Clash, Dead Kennedys and the Pistols. The Replacements, Gun Club, Dream Syndicate, Birthday Party, Minor Threat, Floyd's first album, and Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac were high on my listening list at the time, '85-'86. And the Velvet Underground I was really into, 'cause I had just discovered them in 1985, and it was like discovering a new planet or something, since they had sort of been written out of rock history up to that point. The Cramps were a favorite, as well, of both of us.

Most of the bands we played with or saw were of the hardcore/ thrash variety, though. There weren't any blues-tinged garage bands around, so we were within the hardcore scene, but not in step with it. Our friends from the teenage set were either hardcore kids or neo-hippie types. We fell somewhere in between.

Charleston didn't have many bands, and only a couple stable places to play; it had no college-town scene or radio to support it, so the Charleston scene died out in about five years, as far as DIY/HC specifically. But maybe that was just the typical life-cycle of a scene of that time period. Some of the scene stragglers transitioned up to the bar/drinking scene that consisted of visiting folk, reggae, hippie-jam, and alternative rock groups.

Keith and I did go up with a carload of people to Pittsburgh once to see the Cramps, on the Date With Elvis tour, in 1986, but Lux had lost his microphone or it was stolen or something before the show, so they refused to play the show after the opening band (The Cynics) were done. That was a letdown, to say the least— very unprofessional! But Keith took it in stride, and said, "Heh, Lux wants bucks."



MRR: My impression of West Virginia is that it is both rural and industrial, so I wonder what if any role did your environment and surroundings play in your music/aesthetic (e.g. - the use of metal percussion etc...)

Charleston, especially, has a large chemical industry that grew up around it. Union Carbide was a big employer, and Keith's father "was a top chemist" there, Keith proudly said, and father Ray had his own chemical patents. Keith had gone to Carbide camp during summers. The chemical plants made for great sunrises and sunsets, but certainly degraded the air/ground/water quality and have been blamed for cancer risks in certain neighborhoods.

"Industrial" music was kind of in its waning halcyon days by the mid-'80s. Everyone had sussed out what Neubauten were doing, along with SPK and Throbbing Gristle. There were even a few short-lived bands in the area (SteelNatCole, Big Ugly) that had metaloid clanking going on in some form. One of the reasons I used it on our earliest recording is because I didn't have a drum set. I couldn't play drums anyway, so it was just percussion to me...it fit the song to some extent.

MRR: What was practice like considering you played all of the

music and Keith handled all of the vocals?
We didn't practice much, and only did it to write new songs. For a new song, we'd run through the chords or musical theme and maybe the potential sections of each song, but we never measured out or knew how many of each section there were. I didn't know what the lyrics were to most of it, and Keith didn't really know what was going to happen next, musically, all the time; he just adjusted to whatever sounds were going on while making up or recalling his lyrics. A lot of his phrasing caught me by surprise, since there wasn't a template for some of it.

I had played in a couple of musical duos before, so it wasn't too much of a shock to be reduced to two people. Duos are good for working up material quickly. A 50/50 collaboration can work really well, and when it doesn't work, there's only one person to tell to "fuck off."

So it was kind of experimental, but simple enough to not have to be discussed; we knew enough about music to know that each song has a beginning, a middle, and an end. But there was that element of the unknown that we liked. We discovered that from the first two songs we wrote together in the Mad Daddys; one of the songs was planned out and practiced to a tee, and the other was improvised off of a bass line.

MRR: What were performances like and how did local audiences react to them?
Local audiences, our friends, loved us, so those shows were sort of "normal." Other bands would ask themselves, "How can they get up there and be out of tune and incoherent and not even play a recognizable song and still get love from the audience?" Headliners were pissed off sometimes because we played so long. We always treated our set like we were co-headlining! It was obnoxious, but we wanted to give the audience their psyches' worth in case the headliners didn't deliver.

Keith could be confrontational and played off of the audience. When your backing band is a guy playing guitar and kick-drum, you've got to be a little more demonstrative than the average singer. If he didn't like an audience he could get vile if he was drunk enough, and he'd change lyrics to reflect this. He gave the audience what they "needed" or "deserved," depending on the situation. He saw it as a form of cabaret. Sometimes he had sheer contempt for the audience, since they equaled "stand-ins for humanity" in general. In his mind, people were generally full of crap, didn't know how to live, and had long ago ruined the world. It's not that Keith didn't find Western Civilization interesting, but he would have traded it for the American Indian way of life with no complaints. Other times, when in a psychotropic state, he would be singing to the universe. He might spend portions of the show lying on stage or rolling around. One place we played was an all-ages show with kids as young as ten-years-old. It was practically an afternoon day care center in there, and Keith was spanking some of them and pinching their baby-fat faces.

MRR: Did you ever play outside of West Virginia? Any attempts at touring?
We never played outside West Virginia. It might have been interesting to tour, but it might have been kind of contrived for a band like ours. I can't see us driving in a van clear across to Kansas or somewhere just to antagonize people. The whole bare-bones duo format was an affront to some people, like they were being cheated out of a full band, or that it was a joke at their expense.

One bar wouldn't hire us, because, said the booker, "Drunken bar patrons don't like singers screaming obscenities at them."

MRR: Were there any attempts made to release your music in any form during the band's lifetime?
We sent out a few demo cassettes to a few labels, but never heard back from anyone, not surprisingly! Releasing a record wasn't one of our goals back then, but if Keith had lived, we probably would have recorded an album that year. I was twenty-years-old then. Keith was 25 (almost 26) when he died, so something would have been recorded and released before Keith turned 30. 'Cause Keith believed that 30 was the cut-off age for rock and roll, and for rock singers in particular. He cringed at the thought of old rockers staying past their welcome point. Seeing Mick Jagger run around a football stadium wearing football pants had made Keith sick.

MRR: What prompted your compiling and release of the album? Was there much from your archives that didn't make it onto the album?
The album was a way to memorialize Keith's life/death and put the work of the band in perspective for any potential listeners. I was living in Charleston right after college and was going through my tapes and decided it was time to release an album of some of it. I can't recall how I got the idea to put it out; maybe it was because I had seen a few Morgantown bands press up and release their own stuff. It seemed easy: you just sent a tape off to a factory, slapped some artwork together.

I haven't looked through the tape archive lately, like, in almost a few decades, but there might be more stuff worth hearing in there. I don't really have any of that stuff on me though.

MRR: You mentioned your geographical proximity to Columbus, Ohio. Were you aware of or interested in anything going down in that city, specifically the lo-fi community there revolving around bands like Mike Rep and the Quotas, V3/Vertical Slit, Gibson Bros., Thomas Jefferson Slave Apartments/Great Plains, etc?
I wasn't aware of the Columbus bands at the time, not until '88, by which time I was living up in Morgantown.

Ohio to me was really a place—a place to explore. It was kind of mysterious, since it was less like West Virginia than Kentucky, Pennsylvania, or Virginia were. Ohio was where Appalachia ended and the Midwest began. If I got bored, I'd often head into Ohio with some friends and drive around. There were a lot of strange towns and cities where you didn't know anyone or know your way around, and you could still make it home before your parents had noticed you'd gone—the terrain was flat, the roads straight for the most part, so you could make good time.

I didn't see many shows back then in the '80s. I had a good friend Terrance McKittrick, however, who was going to school at Antioch, in Yellow Springs, so I visited him a few times and saw bands there. Antioch was the most casual school imaginable. The facilities were all run-down, and the whole place was semi-abandoned, like a ghost college. I think the students actually graded themselves, that's how liberal the place was. But the house band at the time was the Gits, who were students there. Mia Zapata let me crash in her room one time, since she was sleeping elsewhere. She had a shoebox of black and white photographs she had taken of herself, so I remember waking up the next morning and looking at those.

Musically, Ohio was, in my mind, where members of the Cramps, Pretenders, Devo, and The Cars hailed from, and a place where the Velvet Underground seemed to have played a lot.

Once, we were in Dayton and the place was dead, so dead that the clerk in this lonesome record/book store was asking us why we were even there. "Why'd you come to Dayton? Dayton's dead," he informed us. I bought a Rolling Stone magazine from 1972, which was about when time had stopped there, apparently. A lot of the downtowns in the tri-state area then had seemingly been killed by a generational turnover and new development. Yuppies were the big consumers then, and they wanted to shop at indoor shopping malls, or at least that's the vision they were sold. Dayton's main downtown department store had become a thrift store, four levels of used clothes, furniture, appliances, home-goods, knick-knacks and whatnot from the '40s-'70s, just like a department store, but full of stuff no one wanted anymore. I don't know what it's like now, but that's how it was then.

MRR: Were you aware of bands like Pussy Galore and Royal Trux who were mining a similar territory?

News traveled more slowly in those days, by word of mouth, so we found out about them along the way. There are actually some overlapping personnel in the Unwanted Christmas Presents / Royal Trux / Pussy Galore family trees. The original Royal Trux drummer, Mike Early, was from Charleston, and he and I had been in a short-lived recording duo together called the Confeterets, in 1985, just before I joined the Mad Daddys. I sort of stopped working with Mike shortly after I joined Keith's band. But Mike had a really good rack-mountable 4-track cassette recorder that he lent me a while later to record "Industrial Death." When Mike moved up to New York a couple springs later, in '87, he fell into Royal Trux after a short stint in Blowgun. So I knew of Royal Trux before they really got going and heard some of their demos and such. Some of the stuff that Mike and I had recorded had the same dysfunctional vibe to it.

A lot of reviewers have compared the Unwanted Christmas Presents record to one or both of those bands, and maybe there is a shared essence of some kind, and the lack of a lot of bass, maybe. We were the same general age and probably had some of the same influences. The resulting sounds, to my ears, are fairly distinct, however. Pussy Galore sounds kind of well-rehearsed and more regimented; they must have practiced a lot at least some of the time. Royal Trux was longer-lived and had all kinds of different phases, from shut-in experimental duo to full-on power rock. Sound-wise, Unwanted Christmas Presents kind of bridges a gap between those two bands, oddly enough. Keith's vocal range is a bit higher than either.

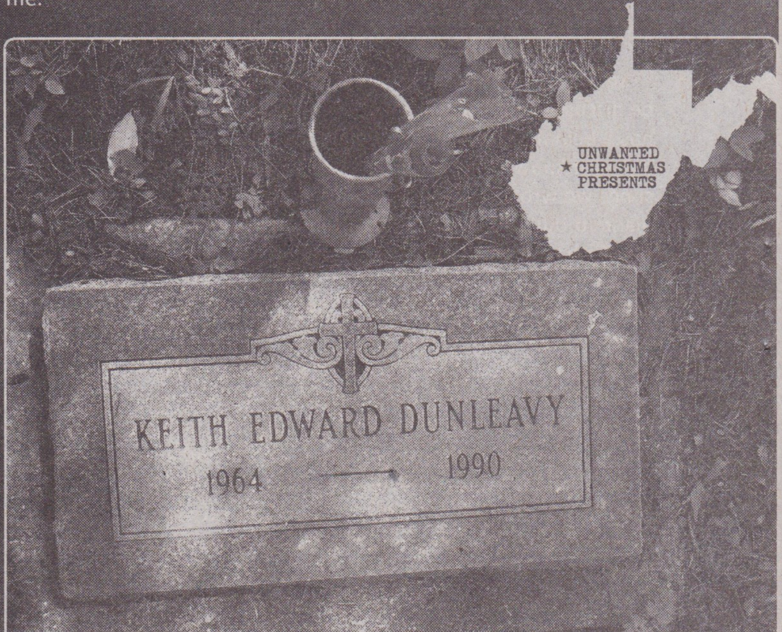
I did see Pussy Galore in late 1987 at CBGBs and met them backstage before they went on. It was when the *Right Now!* album came out. Mike, now in the Royal Trux fold, knew them and brought me back to meet them. They seemed quiet and brainy, the opposite of their simple-minded Flintstones rock image. Jon Spencer was sort of shut-down and probably a bit nervous about their impending show which was starting in ten minutes or so. So for a brief shining (or dark) moment, there were members of the Pussy Galore/Unwanted Christmas Presents/Royal Trux axis all gathered in the tiny, shabby CBGBs dressing room. And I still haven't heard a record or live tape of Pussy Galore that's as good as they were that night, really tight and pronounced.

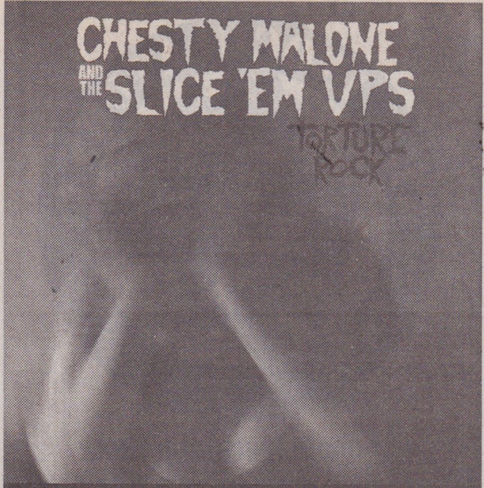
Keith thought the *Groovy Hate* EP was hilarious, and I liked the stuff they released in 1987 most. I didn't hear much of their later stuff. The Trux material I leaned towards were some of their 45s from the early '90s. Haven't heard some of that stuff in ages.

MRR: What was the reception like upon initial release of the LP in '93?

It was what you'd expect for a mostly totally unknown band in retrospective mode. It got some good reviews in a few zines, but back then it was just another indie release amidst a slush pile of alternative-nation bands in the wake of the Nirvana/grunge phenomenon. And, it was a new release by a band that no longer existed. Furthermore, it was only on vinyl, which was kind of outmoded by then. Most everyone had dumped their vinyl and turntables by then, so even people who knew the band didn't hear the record then.

I sent it for review to a few places, and sold some through mail order mostly to places in the US, Europe, and Japan. It seemed that it was in places like Poland or the Ukraine, where, I would guess, life was generally "hard," that people sought out strange and intense music, 'cause I got a few orders from there. I sold about a hundred and fifty copies back in the day. If the internet had been more of a fact of daily life, it might have found a bigger audience initially. But I didn't push the record, because I figured that an audience would find its way to it sooner or later, if at all, and that was just fine with me.





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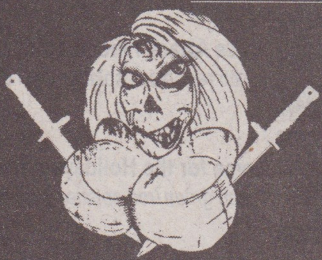

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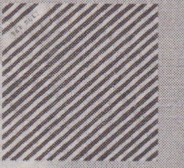

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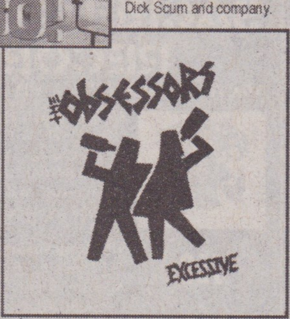

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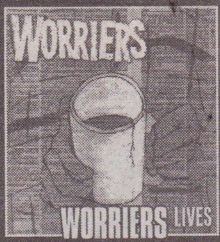

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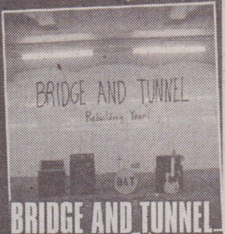
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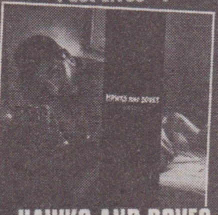
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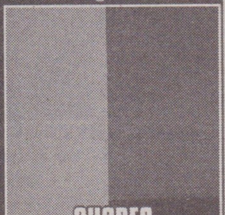

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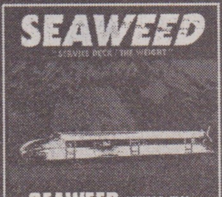
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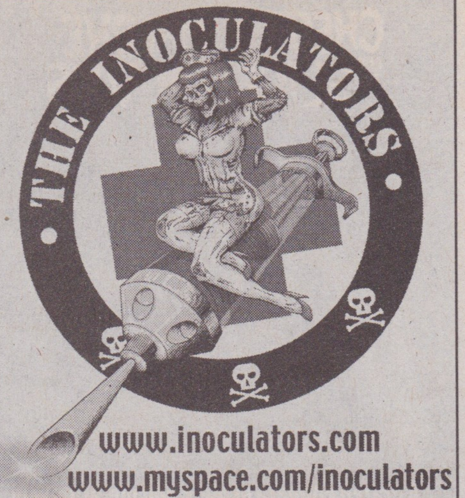
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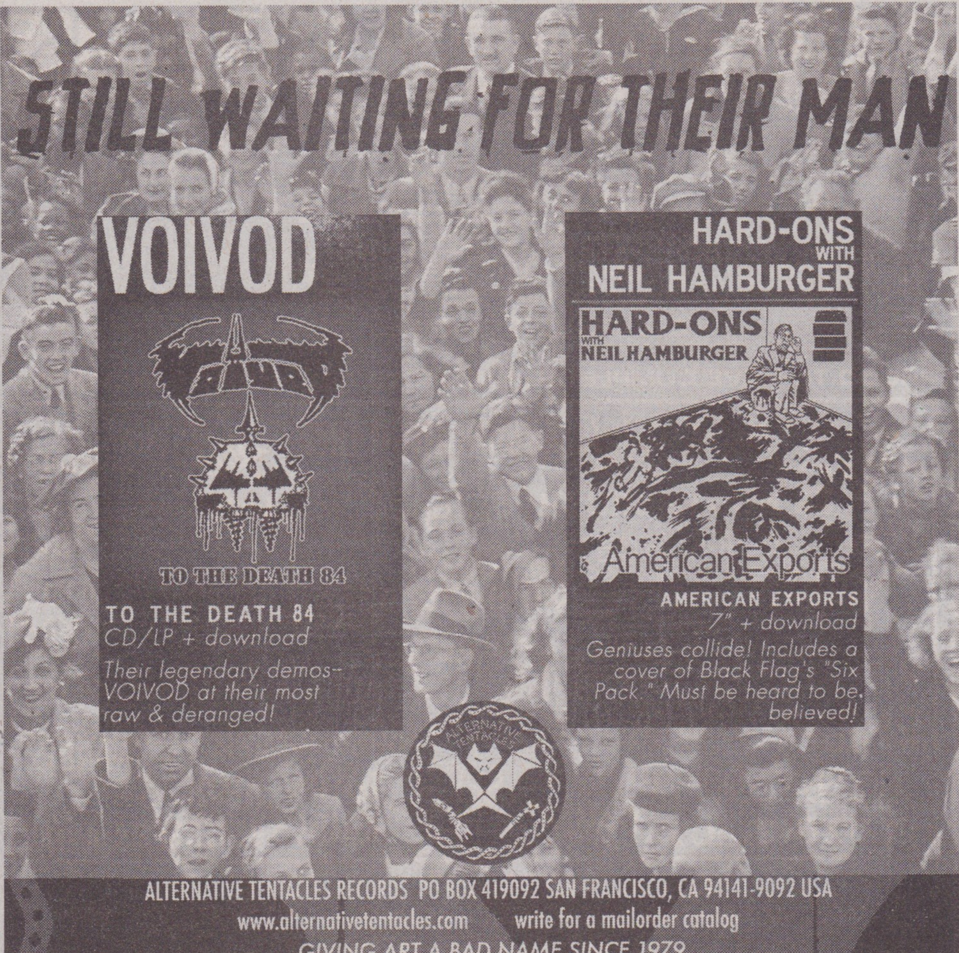
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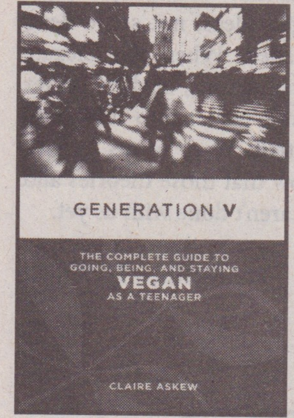

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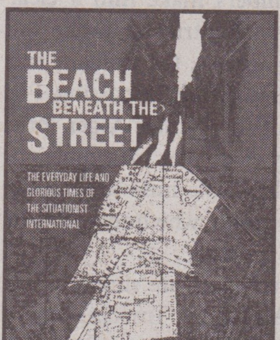
Eleven years ago this coming January, I went vegetarian after reading a bit about factory farms, and went vegan two weeks later after reading John Robbins' *Diet For a New America* in one sitting. It's been a mixed but mostly rewarding ride, and I can't speak for every person's individual biology or socioeconomic, cultural, or geographic situation but it's worked out well for me, with a little bit of effort, flexibility, and a few vitamin deficiency scares. In 2005 at age fourteen, Claire Askew gradually went vegetarian and then vegan, and started writing this book a year later. Five years later, it first saw the light of day, and it definitely reads like something that was written and revised over the course of a few years, as the author both matured mentally and became a better writer. Her best writing strikes a good balance between conviction that's accessible and not off-putting—which is important, given the book's objective—and her worst is wince-inducing attempts at sarcasm and irritating teenage logic, but this doesn't take away from the book's message or strength of argument.

The book is neatly divided into sections that mostly make chronological sense. After telling the story of her own gradual transition and how she broke the news to her parents, the next chapter offers articulate, level-headed responses to arguments that may come from skeptical parents, friends that may be less than supportive (or downright obnoxious) and personal doubts. She devotes the next chapter to offering nutritional advice that is sound, easy to understand (and emphasizes the importance of vitamin B12), and rightly points out that doctors have next to no nutritional training. The following, mishmash "[W]ho's who and what's what" chapter that lists a number of vegan books and organizations might've made more sense at the end of the book, but is definitely at least a stepping stone. Other chapters talk about what vegans eat (and doesn't go overboard with focusing on meat and dairy analogues), finding ethical clothing and toiletries, how to handle school-related situations such as lack of a vegan friendly cafeteria and alternatives to dissection, various opportunities for vegan activism, and simple recipes that seem tasty and are a good range of difficulty levels for people with little to no culinary experience. And because this is a book for teenagers, there is a list of vegan bands—which is probably the only place you'll see the Blood Brothers and I Object in the same list as Bryan Adams and Pink—as well as an extensive list of quotes that directly and indirectly relate to animal rights and staying true to yourself.

Askew seems to make it a point to write for teenagers that are both already politicized, and more mainstream ones for whom animal suffering may be their first exposure to institutionalized injustice, and generally does a good job of appealing to both crowds. As is the case with the vast majority of writing and advocacy that covers the same subject matter, the implied audience for this book is healthy, relatively normal, middle-class teenagers who will be or are attending college, and the reinforcing of these notions is sort of irritating, though I suppose these are legitimate concerns for a lot of people who will be reading this book. I also found her comparisons of animal suffering to race and gender oppression to be superficial, and only offering a surface-level understanding of veganism as an issue related to other issues, and at one point she repeats the moronic "dairy is rape" myth that really needs to be eradicated once and for all. It makes sense that a book about veganism shouldn't get too off topic (my experience has shown that vegans are notoriously single-issue when compared with other activists) and a little understanding or at least acknowledgment of intersectionality would go a long way towards seeing the world in less black and white terms. To her credit, however, she talks about "practical vs. symbolic" veganism, and how puritanical stances don't do anyone any good, which I think is an important point for any new vegan to be exposed to, lest they curse someone out for taking a morning after pill because it was tested on animals (true story).

All criticism and editorializing aside, this is a great, interesting book that would serve as a valuable first resource to anyone making the transition to veganism, teenager or not, and served as a fun, nostalgic read for me that brought back my early years as a vegan.

— Dan Goetz


THE
BEACH
BENEATH THE
STREET
THE EVERYDAY LIFE AND GLORIOUS TIMES OF THE SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL
McKENZIE WARK

The Beach Beneath the Street: The Everyday Life and Glorious Times of the Situationist International
McKenzie Wark
197 pages • $26.95
Verso
www.versobooks.com

Few movements of the last century can boast such an unbridled mix of reverence and disdain as the Situationist International (SI), that mob of anti-art revolutionaries still lauded as the patron saints of malcontents and dissidents across the western world. And to be sure much of this attention—both venerating and critical—seems warranted. The fifteen years of the group's existence was marked by brilliant and often obtuse texts, frequent in-fighting, splits, merges, violent excommunications, and ultimately the events of May '68, which surely left their legacy indelibly inked across the imaginations of future radicals.

In the four decades since their dissolution the number of pages written about the International has surely eclipsed their own publications ten-fold. It seems that every few years a renewed interest in the Situationists emerges, and this year alone we've already seen a biography of Debord also released. So it leads to the question: do we really need anything else? And I would be one to say probably not. The sheer number of attempts to draw out what is valuable in the Situationist movement suggests that most of these avenues have been exhausted. But in addition, the quality and depth of many of these efforts has usually left something to be desired.

It seems wrestling with the SI's significance and theory can lead down two treacherous paths. Down one we find the tendency to tell a character-based story, simplify the events, and venerate the now-familiar personalities. But down the other a possibly more dangerous option lurks: to turn the SI's strategies into rigid concepts, relegate them to university textbooks, and incorporate those once incendiary words to stale language of academese. And maybe that is why we can live with one more book, which attempts to avoid both these tendencies.

McKenzie Wark's *The Beach Beneath the Street: The Everyday Life and Glorious Times of the Situationist International* skillfully steers its way between the perilous extremes to carve out a story that neither neglects its complexity nor fetishizes its insights. From the revelries of Parisian Left Bank bars to the streets of Paris in May 1968, Wark attempts to trace the theories, project, and ultimately the revolutionary implications of the Situationist International. But his book goes beyond delineating a simple history; as he states in his introduction this endeavor is about "retrieving a past specific to the demands of this present." And in the pages that follow he culls from the Situationist *oeuvre* to weigh in on everything from bit torrent downloading and open source programming to the world-system's recent financial crises. But what sets Wark's book apart from those many other failed histories is in its resistance to merely telling the easy story.

It's tempting to see the Situationists as primarily the project of one man, Guy Debord. Certainly Debord was key in establishing and maintaining the group, and his charismatic and often scathing rants and denouncements of other members make him a clear protagonist in this story. However, Wark also tries to frame the rise and fall of the SI through its minor figures, the brilliant and often excluded characters that others mention only in passing. For instance, he draws out the importance of the painter Asger Jorn, who helped support the group financially even after his expulsion. While best know for his art, Jorn actually wrote innovative—and mostly forgotten—critiques of political economy, which compliment Debord's own burgeoning theory of the Spectacle.

The other names that pop up again and again are similarly less familiar, but each receives their due. Alexander Trocchi's *sigma portfolio*, Constant Nieuwenhuys' New Babylon project, Giuseppe Gallizio's *ensemble painting*, Henri Lefebvre's "thing of things," and Michelle Bernstein's detourned novels: Wark teases out how these people and ideas come to bear on the Situationist project, and how their confrontations and contradictions ultimately make this project something to reckon with.

The Beach Beneath the Street presents a story and analysis, complete with failures, successes and loose ends. No doubt some will argue that Wark leaves this story too open, refuses to bring it to a close, denies any final meaning, and rightly so. Ultimately though, I think Wark tries to give us a collection of attempts to bring this history back into the world as *living*—to *situate* the Situationists in a more embedded way into our current perception of radical possibilities in the present. The familiar watchwords of the SI—dèrive, detournement, potlach—appear as one would expect, but Wark presents them as breathing, charged ideas, not some dead terms once again dusted off and rehashed. When we relegate events to pure history we rob moments, situations, of their power to change. We turn specifics into constants, tactics into rules, and ultimately render radical gestures impotent. Wark wants to give these moments a different history: to show that those theories and practices of the Situationist International aren't done with us yet.

— Matthew McKenzie

"SHOULD I EAT THAT RECORD... OR NOT?"

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

ANYBODY CAN DIE NOBLY FOR A CAUSE, THE SIGN OF MATURITY IS TO LIVE DAY BY DAY FOR THAT CAUSE

It endlessly amazes me that seemingly priceless and unforgettable footage of historical events can go missing for decades and suddenly be mysterious found in some basement gathering dust. How does this happen? **Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975** is a compilation of segments shot for Swedish television that have disappeared since they were originally broadcast. Director Göran Olsson found the 16mm films when he was researching another documentary and compiled them into nine parts, each devoted to a year from 1967 to 1975. Although it is stated at the beginning that the film is not a complete examination of the black power movement, **Black Power Mixtape: 1967-1975** does provide a compelling and inspirational look at it.

Black Power Mixtape: 1967-1975 starts in Hallandale, FL with a brief introduction of the state of racism and poverty in the United States. The film moves quickly from that small town to the larger civil rights movement as shown through participants such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, Eldridge Cleaver, Huey P. Newton and Angela Davis. The film never gets into the specifics of the demise of the Black Panther Party, but it does examine the influence of drugs in black communities of the early '70s tying the service of soldiers in Vietnam with the usage of heroin back in US cities.

Black Power Mixtape: 1967-1975 has the advantage of an outsider's view of the situation. Usually, the events surrounding the Black Panthers are presented with an obvious pro or con bias. The Swedish interviewers have a sympathetic lean, but are mostly coming from a non-predetermined viewpoint. Questions are asked almost innocently and the answers seem to be more unguarded than usual. The moments captured are revealing and fascinating. Carmichael interviews his mother about the racism his father suffered at his job. He is respectful to his mother's sensitivity, but still works to get her to discuss it. Angela Davis is interviewed in prison and discusses the daily violence she recalls as a child in Birmingham, AL as the background through which to view the perceived violence of the Black Panthers. She is insightful and passionate.

The clips shown in **Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975** are accompanied by the thoughts and reflections of present day activists and musicians. Talib Kweli offers insight to modern day government surveillance. He relates that he was listening to speeches by Stokely Carmichael to get inspired for his upcoming recordings. When he went through security at an airport later, he was pulled aside by the TSA agents and grilled about why he was listening to recordings of Carmichael. Erykah Badu seems like she is thinking of other things while recording her commentary. Fortunately Harry Belafonte, Kathleen Cleaver, John Forté, Questlove and others are paying attention and have interesting perspectives to offer.

I went to this screening in the midst of Occupy Wall Street activity and related happenings including the one in Berkeley a block from the theater. Watching **Black Power Mixtape: 1967-1975** makes me glad to see the OWS movement is gathering such momentum. (http://blackpowermixtape.com)

I went to see Naked Aggression at 924 Gilman last week. Being a veteran of '80s hardcore, it always amuses me that people still slam dance at shows. Of course, in present day music it doesn't matter if the band is punk or not, people will always try to start a pit. Usually it is a couple of lunk head guys. However, the thing that struck me at the Naked Aggression show is what a diverse mix of people was involved in the pit that night. There were women, men, kids, adults, small and big. One woman had on a furry, teddy bear backpack that surprisingly remained on her back throughout the whole show. Overall, this pit lacked the usual overt aggressiveness. It was mostly just people rapidly moving around in a circle. I was glad to see they were getting some exercise while having fun.

The 924 Gilman pit reminded me of the relative innocence of the early years of punk in **Spokanarchy!**, a documentary of the early Spokane, WA scene. The bands featured in this film Sweet Madness, PP-Ku, Doubtful Nonagenarians, Terror Couple, Vampire Lezbos among others were previously unknown to me. The Spokane punk scene starts off in a similar way to every other punk scene you have heard of. There are some weirdoes who start a band, but have nowhere to play. They start getting shows together wherever possible and eventually open a club. Along the way more people come out of the woodwork and form bands. Zines are written. Fliers and art are made.

One of the more interesting aspects of the Spokane scene is that it seemed to remain insulated from the overall growing punk movement. For an extended period touring bands never came to Spokane to play, which caused the scene to develop quite uniquely. When a "real" club opens and begins to book touring bands the result is somewhat negative. The DIY punk club closes and the local bands now have to deal with a club owner who is not part of the scene, takes advantage of the bands and doesn't pay them.

Spokanarchy! seems to make an interesting assertion that Spokane has not produced one band that eventually became well known. All the other scene documentaries seem to have that one band that is at least valuable to record collectors. **Spokanarchy!** seems aware of this and displays an unspoken pride of its apparent unimportance. For that I admire it. Most involved in the scene moved to other states to "make it," but their involvement in the small Spokane scene has had an indelible impact on their lives. (http://sponanarchy.com)

The best thing about the **Jesus Lizard Club** DVD is that during the first note of the first song David Yow has jumped into the audience. The second best thing about it is that by the fourth song his shirt is off. That says something for a show that is twenty-two songs long. Why waste time getting off to a slow start?

Jesus Lizard Club was filmed on the first day of the Jesus Lizard 2009 reunion tour in Nashville, TN. It is professionally shot. The sound is good. It is an exciting performance. That really is all you need for a live concert DVD. Well, of course, you need to like the band too. (http://mdvb2b.com)

La France Pue (translated to France stinks) is a collective based in Saint Etienne who organizes shows for international punk bands. Over the years these shows were recorded and filmed by NRV Productions. The footage has now been shifted through and compiled as **La France Pue Vol. 1** and **Vol. 2** DVDs. There is an amazing amount of bands here with occasional clips of interviews or street scenes. The bands are shot with one camera and a steady hand or perhaps tripod. The sound is good too.

Volume 1 contains bands such as Makiladoras, MDC, Vomit For Breakfast, Cripple Bastards, From Ashes Rise, Ed Wood plus many more. Volume 2 features Leatherface, Queers, Criminal Damage, Chicken's Call, Wasted, Provoked, Napalm Dance and a whole lot more. (La France Pue, 14, rue Claude Delaroa, 42000 St. Etienne, France, http://www.lafrancepue.org)

The fight to save KUSF radio station in San Francisco rages on even though we are still waiting for a decision from the FCC. Go to savekusf.org for the latest and write to the FCC telling them to stop the sale and preserve local community radio. This could happen in your town.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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RECORDS

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(FS) Fred Schrunk
(JS) Jess Scott
(MS) Martin Sorrondeguy
(AU) Andrew Underwood

16 MAS – "Rape the Earth" LP

The first thing that I was really stoked on was the crunched out bass tone in what sounded like some mid-tempo Euro-crust, then the band throws in some grinding blasts and a few elements you'd expect more out of a hardcore band. I dig the blend. I also kept coming back to the drums. The mid-tempo parts carry a simple punk beat but then a blast part comes up and it changes the whole tenor of the band into something more aggressive and angry. Lyrical content seems to deal with general crust topics that fans of the genre will have seen before. A lot of song titles and lyrics are in Czech but with notes in English. Here's a good sample from the title track of the record: "filthy water – and grey sky / human wish – all must die / natural rape – no escape." If that's too serious for you they also have songs called "Emo Sucks" and "Fuck Punk Superstars" so it's not all depressing stuff. (BL)
(GRF / Noise Mafia / Hellbeat / Rarach Katus / Everydayhate / Aback / Mates Prokop)

ACID BABY JESUS – LP

Modern garage rock out of Athens, Greece. Jangle-y guitars, fuzzed out vocals and pretty harmonies. Although this record could easily be lumped in with all the other present day garage rockers, most of the time this reminds me of late-era BEATLES when they were getting into drugs and adding psychedelic effects to songs. Then at other times it reminds me of the soundtrack for a carnival scene in a movie. Though more than likely those two could be interchangeable. Cool stuff. I like the picture on the CD cover too. (CK)
(Slovenly)

ACID BABY JESUS – LP

Greece's Acid Baby Jesus is clearly a product of the post BLACK LIPS school of garage punk. There's an obvious psych influence, chanting group vocals and layers upon layers of fuzz. It's a formula that's obviously proven itself successful in recent years and these folks do it as well as anyone else out there. Fans of this stuff will not be disappointed, but they won't be knocked on their ass either. (MC)
(Slovenly)

ACTIVE MINDS – "Bury the Past: Build the Future" EP

I can't believe this lot is still self-releasing their hyper politicized hardcore records some 25 years on…damn…commitment. Side a is fast, yet really melodic reminding me of old SNUFF demos but with a CONFLICT bent—sounds weird right? Totally works. The flip is blast beat madness, which is what I expected from ACTIVE MINDS. I must admit, I haven't given these a listen in decades…but it's pretty fuckin' ripping… Now reissue the SAS EP. (TB)
(Looney Tunes)

AEGES – "Roaches/Dirt"

I'm not going to get into any arguments about what punk is but what we have here are two songs of slick sounding hard rock, stoner rock, desert rock, whatever you would like to call it. The A-side is an up-tempo, down-tuned number in the vein of QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE with gruff vocals, harmonizing back-ups and a spacey bridge. The B-side is a slower number with even more slick vocals that sounds like it could have been on MTV3 (or whatever one plays music) in the early 2000s. I officially take back the stoner rock part and apologize to stoners everywhere. (PA)
(Hawthorne Street)

ALL SYSTEMS FAIL / APATIA NO – split LP

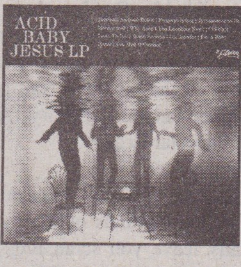
Venezuela's APATIA NO has been around for a while and has a number of records out including splits with JABARA, SIN DIOS, RASH, PROTESTERA and a few others. I love their take on anarcho hardcore. Their sound has changed over time and has less of a basic punk hardcore sound. They still use multiple vocalists including one who barks, one who growls and female spoken vocals. Looks like half their tracks were recorded in 2005 and the other half in 2009. ALL SYSTEMS FAIL released a full length seven years ago and I hadn't heard anything from them since. I like their take mid-'90s political hardcore. Surprisingly ALL SYSTEMS FAIL is from Salt Lake City but their brand of hardcore sounds like it's from South America. I hear some similarities with LOS CRUDOS. Some tracks sung in English and some in Spanish. I could listen to their side of this 12" over and over. Pick this one up. (MH)
(Noseke / Jornalero)

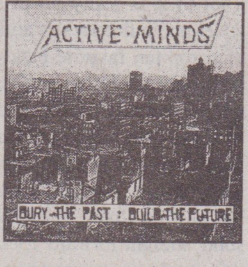
ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE – "This is War" EP

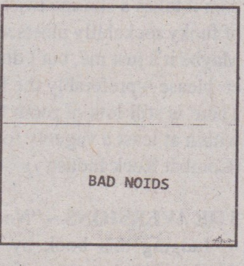
Picture disk. The B-side sounds like ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE in 2011 covering PENTANGLE and the A-side sounds so bad I turned it off and quit *MRR*. (BB)
(Papagájův Hlasatel)

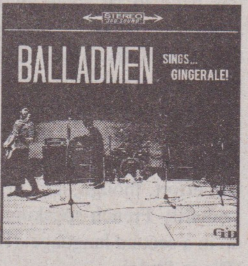
JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT – "It's Working (part 1)/ It's Working (part 2)"

This sounds like four Guitar Center employees demonstrating some newfangled effects pedals in a masturbatory jam session in front of a few aspiring teenage stoners in a suburb of LA. There is some sort of phaser effect on the guitars that never stops. The vocals are completely unintelligible as they are drenched so heavily in some miserable effect that the singer sounds like he's whining about the power supply to his pedal board, only through a very large fan at the end of a tunnel. The A-side is called "It's Working (part 1)" and the B-side is called "It's Working (part 2) but unfortunately, it's not. (SL)
(In the Red)









the Barrerarudas

ART INSTITUTE – "People Like It When You Fail" LP

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the first thing that one notices about this LP. The cover art is by Raymond Pettibon. Now, as readers of *MRR* well know, Pettibon was the brother of SST records/ BLACK FLAG's Greg Ginn, and his artwork defined the nihilistic, anti-hippy aesthetic of band and label. Pettibon's distinctive drawings graced the covers of some of the best hardcore and punk records of the era, not to mention the countless flyers and t-shirts. When you put a Raymond Pettibon drawing on the cover of your album, you are writing a check that your ass fucking *better* be able to cash. Unfortunately for ART INSTITUTE, their account is racking up some overdraft fees. For the most part, it's competently executed, quirky, dark pop, drawing on strains of synth pop and post punk: there are elements of WIRE, TALKING HEADS, and REM. Everything is crisp and tightly controlled, almost predictable. On the whole it's a fine album; however, they got off on the wrong foot altogether when they attempted to visually associate themselves with one of the most visceral, genre-defining periods in American music history. (AM)
(Artificial Head)

ATOM NOTES – "Spare Parts" LP

Some brands of European "punk rock" can really leave you scratching your head… I find that a lot of it is really hit or miss with the scattered styles and influences. It almost seems like they pick their top-ten favorite bands and try to emulate all of them, thereby coming up with their own really unique and often odd sound. Sometimes this works well and you get an amazing band. Other times… not so much. I'm afraid that this one is more of the latter for me. Not that it's bad to try to be original, but on this album alone there is some decent and solid straight-forward rock and upbeat punk, but then it takes a strange twist and ventures into a kind of funky rockabilly meets surf on a couple of songs? Maybe it's just me, but I don't get it. One or the other, please—preferably the former and not the latter! There is still lots of room for variety and creativity within at least a vaguely focused style. (ML)
(Combat Rock Industry)

THE AVERSIONS – "Nocturnal Ghosts" LP

Judging this book by its cover, you'd expect this band to be some awful, maybe artsy, maybe sappy, but definitely emo band. It is really none of that, thankfully. These Canadians are playing fast rock with vocals that are actually sung rather than screamed or yelled. The words are kinda weird, it's like they try too hard to form a rhyme scheme. It all works, but it seems like it's forced at times. Not a bad effort, though, as I'm guessing these guys are primarily French speaking. It's better than I could do in a second language. (BD)
(Die in Style)

AVERSIONS – "Nocturnal Ghosts" LP

A French-Canadian mishmash of several different styles, none of which really hit the mark. I hear some CRAMPS, TSOL, and even some UK goth influence. Honestly, the music is decent and I was into it for a bit, but the songs are kind of long, and then I started reading the lyrics. Painful is an understatement. This guy shouldn't be allowed to pen any more lyrics until an intervention is staged. Example: "My sweet little belle, for you my heart is droolin'! Then he kissed her farewell and moved to another darlin'!" So yeah, the lyrics read like the diary of a misogynistic fifteen-year-old Bauhaus fan. Suggestion for these guys; become an instrumental band, please. (KM)
(Die In Style)

BACCHUS – LP

Long intricate intros reminiscent of FALL OF EFRAFA. Lyrics are about basic feelings of human isolation and disconnection from humanity. One intro leads into galloping D-beat similar to KONTATTO. This album is very crust metal with sick wailing guitar. Epic at times and sometimes clean enough to be bordering on that KYLESA sound. Good, non-generic cover art involving antlers and some grim reaper-esque mountain man on a stag. Record is on clear fuchsia vinyl. (AE)
(Contraszt! / Distro-y)

BAD NOIDS – "Ticket to Mars" EP

Stripped down, lo-fi thrashing Midwest hardcore. Sounds like it was made by adults who should have known better but simply don't give a shit, which is its charm. (WN)
(Oddjob Extraordinaire)

BALLADMEN – "Gingerale" EP

Japanese garage that pays more than a slight homage to the ROLLING STONES, which being a very familiar visitor to my turntable is fine by me. Mangled English adds to the overall charm, giving it a slight sloppy-in-a-good-way feel. It's nifty and well played whilst maintaining that all-important dance floor groove. Some early PRETTY THINGS inspired blues adds an extra toughness to the R'n'B friendly sound…I'm liking. (SD)
(GTD)

BALLOON FLIGHTS – "Tales From The Basement" CD

Ringing open chord pop punk from Spain with vocals in English. Musically a mix of the ATARIS, HUSKER DU, and SCREECHING WEASEL with vocals that are a little on the thin and whiny side. Still, I liked this, as the songs are quite tuneful and tasteful. Although not nearly as strong as the mentioned bands, this is a decent full-length release. (RL)
(self-released)

THE BAM BAMS – "Runaways" EP

This is soft, pretty, female-fronted pop music that has real guitars and real bass and real drums. It's melodic and it's catchy and it's sort of ballad-y or ballad-ish. It's more punk in its attitude and DIY ethic than it is in its sound. Still, it's the kind of shit that I lap up like a little fucking puppy. And with a song titled, "Tickle Party," you can expect that teenage boys with mohawks will be spilling DNA by the bucket load. (KK)
(Cricket Cemetery)

BANNLYST – "Diskografi" LP

A collection of tracks from one of the finest '80s Norwegian hardcore bands. These tracks are pure rampaging insanity with throaty vocals that have been emulated (intentionally or inadvertently) by everyone from BASTARD to TRAGEDY. Most of these tracks were collected on a shamefully subpar bootleg LP in the mid '00s that sounded like it was lifted off the internet, but this LP was clearly put together with love, including photos, flyers and lyrics. Awesome and essential. (WN)
(Norwegian Leather)

BANNLYST – "Live at Blitz" LP

'80s Norwegian hardcore had been a little hard to break into for a lot of people since there are so few releases and what does exist is really hard to come by. Nowadays a quick gander at *KFTH* and a couple G***** searches and you can zip it all on to your princessPod in no time, but ya know… Anyway… this fifteen-track live LP—which, as I just noticed, was actually recorded in 1992, and not the mid-'80s heyday of the band at all—comes really close to featuring every song in the BANNLYST discography (comps and cassette-only releases included), give or take a couple. The recording here is quite amazing for a live record, with the big-grunting-bear vocals as the most present element, but every instrument is perfectly represented. These guys are one of my favorite European hardcore bands of the '80s, so this live set is a welcome listen, but I'm just not one for live recordings, even when they sound this good. If you like your hardcore fast, very melodic, gruff, tough, and technically proficient, look no further than BANNLYST…or this whole generation of Norwegian hardcore and X-Port Plater records for that matter. (JU)
(Norwegian Leather)

THE BARRERACUDAS – "Nocturnal Missions" CD

Enjoyable poppy rock music. It is straightforward with nice melodies. The singer has a decent voice. I do find it rather odd to hear a song about Baby Jessica twenty-four years after she fell down that well. However, it is the catchiest song on the CD. "Baby Jessica" is a stripped down RAMONES rip off in the best possible way. That being said my favorite song is "Don't Roll Your Eyes," probably for the sentiment, I am an extreme eye roller, but also because it sounds like something PAUL COLLINS could have written. (CK)
(Douche Master)

BASTARD – "Controlled in the Frame" EP

Be subjective with this record? Impossible. There are a handful of perfect hardcore 7"s and this has, since its release, been one. Having never been (legitimately) re-pressed, this record has not always gotten its due, and hopefully this release will correct that. I can't imagine anyone who is into punk who wouldn't love this record. Heavy without being metal, thick-sounding but not over-produced, gang choruses everywhere…this is as good as hardcore punk gets and an essential case for why Japanese hardcore rules. 540 records has done you a favor, and you ought to return that favor by picking up this re-issue ASA-fucking-P. The packaging is, if anything, nicer than the original and it sounds just as fantastic. Play fucking loud, especially "Sick Plot." I just hope their *Wind of Pain* LP eventually gets the same treatment. (AU)
(540)

BLACK BUG – "Shard of Glass" EP

BLACK BUG makes blown-out dance-y synth music from their home in Sweden. Like the bulk of Hozac records it entertains but doesn't grab, it's dark but it's not desperate, it hits the red but doesn't hit the roof. "Shard of Glass" is the standout track, female lead vocals swinging with some generosity over gloomy fuzzed-out keys. But by the time "Machine" rolls around it already feels like they're tired at their own show, making the flipside's "Police Helicopter" sound like some unsure space between an unfinished outtake and a path trodden with schticky early '00s electro-something-something. I think this could really get some folks to boogie on the bus with their white earbuds, but it seems like some exploratory demo that Hozac jumped the gun on releasing or something. (JS)
(Hozac)

BLACK MAMBO – "Lovestruck Romeos" CD

Advertised as "soul punk," this Finnish band does the punk thing with a slight world music bent. Almost like a more rocking JOE STRUMMER AND THE MESCALEROS with some horns in the mix. Although the material here doesn't knock me out, this does have a good groove at times and is a nice change of pace. (RL)
(Bad Oxygen)

BLOODCOCKS UK – CD

In the history of the world, has any record with a blow-up doll on the cover actually been good? If the DAMNED had attempted to break into the softer-side-of-alternative-rock market by recording a gross '90s album, it might've resembled this. But even the author of "Jet Boy Jet Girl" would've had more tact than to write a song called "Zombie Porn." (DG)
(Wood Shampoo)

BOSS MUSTANGS – CD

With a name like BOSS MUSTANGS and band photos featuring all members sporting paisley shirts, (mostly) short hair and holding vintage guitars, I was naturally expecting some retro '60s drag or garage rock. But this is way heavier than anything I imagined! The songs are dominated by loud, fuzzy power chords with a tinge of psychedelic influence, conjuring up the spirits of bands such as BLUE CHEER, MC5 and FRIJID PINK, but with a modern production that results in a sound more like the SEWERGROOVES mixed with the HIVES rather than anything from the late '60s. These guys pull off precisely what contemporary bands inspired by music of previous era should do—make tunes distinctive enough to stand on their own merit today, but also uphold the form, sound and spirit of the originals. (BG)
(Spinout)

BRAIN F≠ – "Sleep Rough" LP

This *rules*. I feel like this band used to be a two-piece? Well they aren't anymore, and the sound is less claustrophobic and total—more digestible. I can't decide what I prefer…I sort of like the stripped down attack of the 7"s. They used to remind me of a less downer/more garage-ier GUN OUTFIT mixed with this old Olympia band PLASTIQUE (that Sarah Utter used to be in, see the song "The K.I.L.L." for further reference). A millions squirrely riffs and hooks crammed into each song, a band that sounds consumed by what it does but also sorta indifferent… It's got a garage-y swagger but it's not really garage, like the TYRADES on ludes? Watching the TYRADES while you're on ludes then starting a band?! Bad reviewer alert! Someone kill me! It's got the relentless attack of some of the early WIPERS 7"s ("No Solution" and "Does It Hurt"), but it's not really that either, more all over the place. In short this is punk rock. It's good and imaginative and off kilter and somehow sounds bored *and* aggro, with male/female vocals. I can imagine this appealing to fans of the VICIOUS, people looking for a modern day Dangerhouse records; it's just so relentless. (LG)
(Grave Mistake / Sorry State)

BRAINOIL – "Death of this Dry Season" LP

I'm a pretty unabashed BRAINOIL fanboy so getting my mitts on their first LP since 2003 was pretty much my "fuck yes!" moment for the month. For fans of heavy music, it doesn't get much better. Sludgy/doom-ish bands can usually only do one or two things right but this record draws from a deeper trove of musical resources. These dudes are the connoisseurs of sludge. The faster punkish parts of these songs transition seamlessly into crushing doom, and then into jammed-out stoney riffage, all the while maintaining a heaviness and snarl that makes every part sound like a BRAINOIL song. I don't know what time these songs are in but I find myself having a hard time headbanging along and the changes throw off my simple technique. It reminds me of power violence bands and what they're trying to do with all the starts and stops but these guys do it by crafting complex and interesting music. Fans of SARDONIS, the ROLLER, SLEEP, and EYEHATEGOD will all find something on this record to dig on. The packaging is sharp with weirdly disturbing art and a poster is included. Recommended as fuck. (BL)
(20 Buck Spin)

BRASS CASKETS / COLD SNAP – split EP

This mysterious guy aesthetic thing in hardcore is getting to be too much. The sides on this record aren't labeled, I can't figure out where these bands are from, and the COLD SNAP side doesn't have their band name, just initials. The frustration I'm experiencing as a reviewer was not boding well for this record when I put it on. The first mysterious band was pretty good. I looked at the lyrics and tried to make a match. The band's name is BRASS CASKET and they rip some heavy nonmetallic hardcore. It made me feel punchy. Stoked, I flipped it over to what I have deduced is the COLD SNAP side and they play killer dark hardcore with spacey guitar. Fucking victory. I was having a bad day before this. Both bands are super heavy and aggressive. The decipherable lyrics are bitter and angry, delivered in a clenched-fist fury. This is quality slow and brutal hardcore punk. I was digging it so much I went and got high and listened to it again. Holy shit, it's still amazing. (BL)
(Redscroll)

THE BREED – "Crossroads" CD

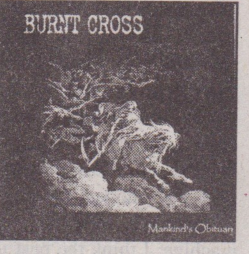
This BREED is from the Czech Republic and plays straightforward punk hardcore. While I tend to like no frills hardcore like this I can't really get by the vocals. The band adds some nice melodic moments but it's at these moments were the singer tries to sing and it just doesn't cut it. I really don't know what else to say. This just isn't moving me. (HM)
(Aback Distriouce)

BURNING ITCH – LP

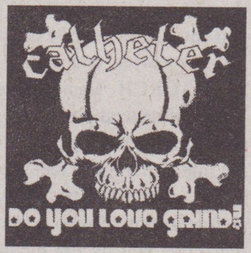
Finally, the first album from BURNING ITCH, a consistently impressive goon-punk solo project from what can only be the most polluted, horrible armpit of the Sourthern United States. All the tunes have that whole caveman vocal delivery, which runs the 50/50 risk of impressing or grating, depending on one's annual SPITS intake. What works for me about BURNING ITCH is his seemingly effortless tightrope walking between really catchy pop and disgusting, idiotic punk rock. There are hints of actual songwriting talent here, yet it's executed just stupidly enough to warrant comparisons to the EAT or other almost ready for prime time punks. I would consider this one of those happy accidents that makes things all that much more appealing. Great album. (MC)
(Tic Tac Totally)

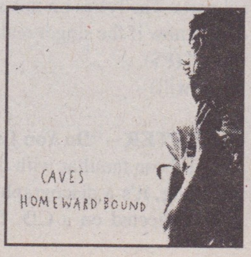
BLACK MAMBO
Lovestruck Romeo

BRASS CASKETS



CARRYTHETORCH
SIGNS OF HOPE
STRIKE ANYWHERE





BURNING SONS – "Reduced to Equality" 12"

It's crazy to see a new hardcore album being put out by Mystic records! The pummeling hardcore of BURNING SONS is angrier and definitely louder than anything that ever came out on the great "sampler" comps back in the day, but that's what makes this such a triumphant return for the label; they're kicking things off with a worthy present-day band and not just relying on their old catalog. And *Reduced to Equality* smokes all the way through, being a heavy fusion of hardcore punk and metal, and sounding something like John Brannon singing for the CRO-MAGS or CRUMBSUCKERS. As you could probably guess, lyrical content does not deal with themes of holding hands, falling in love, or general happiness. A solid release, overall, and it's good to see the Mystic skull spinning on the turntable again. (BG)

(Mystic)

BURNT CROSS – "Mankind's Obituary" CD

This CD compiles the last three EPs from BURNT CROSS with some extra, unreleased material. If you're unfamiliar with the band, they are a two-piece anarcho punk project. The songwriting, vocals, and lyrics are fucking killer; to my ears, they sound like the finest moments of CONFLICT or CRASS in their more straight-ahead moments, with tinges of SCHWARZENEGGAR and other anarcho bands. My one complaint with this band is that there is something slightly lacking in the recordings. To be honest, I just think it's almost impossible to capture the energy required when using a drum machine: I think the best use for them is when you don't even try to make them sound like live drums. So while this band has written some of the best punk songs of the last few years, I'd love to hear them recorded with a full lineup of musicians. Don't get me wrong—BURNT CROSS wipes the floor with most current punk bands. Just imagine what they'd be like with a full aural onslaught. (AM)

(Tadpole)

CARRY THE TORCH / SIGNS OF HOPE – split EP

Sometimes a record cover will give you a little bit of insight into what you're getting into. This record cover has a kid in a STRIKE ANWHERE shirt liberating animals. While this won't provide you any sort of definite clarity as to what lies inside, it does provide you with a starting point. CARRY THE TORCH sounds like MODERN LIFE IS WAR-influenced punk, but with more metallic guitars. Sincere intelligent lyrics about the benefits of not internalizing the messages engendered by a consumer culture and trying to reconcile your internal self-definition of who you are with the expectations put on to you by the media. SIGNS OF HOPE is straightforward hardcore music with breakdowns, palm mutes, sliding octaves as leads and chanted vocal parts. The lyrics on this side aren't bad, though I don't know if the singer really is like a "modern day slave." (P$)

(Goodwill)

CATHETER – "Do You Love Grind?" CD

For those familiar with the band, this isn't a new recording, it's a discography of the band's 7"s and splits collected on a CD. For noobs, CATHETER plays killer stoner grind, has been around since the late '90s, and the band's shifting cast has included people from every grind band you can think of. I totally don't have these recordings in their original vinyl form but apparently that is ok, because all us newjack kids can put this on the shelf instead. Not as much cred but there are some brutal tracks on there and the sound is pretty good. Good enough for me. (BL)

(303 / Legion)

CATHETER / STREETWALKER – split EP

Two good takes on grindcore. STREETWALKER, from Seattle mixes up their sound, at times leaning more towards heavy hardcore but then all of a sudden they blast away. CATHETER has been around for a while and I've always felt they went unnoticed. Their previous releases have been good and these two tracks are no exception. Grindcore with a pinch of death metal. A short three-song 7", but worth checking out. (MH)

(Haunted Hotel / Bad People / Haunted Hotel / 303 / Rescued From Life / Legion)

CAVES – "Homeward Bound" CD

These guys are an emotional pop punk band from the UK. You know, songs about despair and hope and shit. Lots of guitar solos, heartfelt breakdowns, and of course more than enough "whoa-ohs." If you like Kiss Of Death records, you'll dig these guys. (FS)

(Specialist Subject)

CHAOS UK – LP

This album is CHAOS UK's first full-length record after the *Burning Britain* and *Loud, Political and Uncompromising* 7"s. This LP is super bass heavy and has a stench of cider. The "A" in CHAOS UK is an anarchy sign because CHAOS UK was a punk band. Songs like "Mentally Insane" are still relevant—who knew there were just as many retarded, glue out in the corner, drugged out punks in 2011 as there were in 1983. This is a punk way of life soundtrack for us punk punks. If you're a cider drinker and like more recent bands like BOG PEOPLE and the PENIS or staple bands like CHAOTIC DISCHORD and DISORDER—you probably already have this record. If you don't have the original, get this press—although the original is easy to find and affordable. All noise and words by CHAOS U.K. (AE)

(Papagájův Hlasatel)

CHESTY MALONE AND THE SLICE 'EM UPS – "Torture Rock" CD

Imagine a room filled with dirty ashtrays, empty beer bottles, CD cases of the PLASMATICS and MOTORHEAD with razorblade scratches and traces of cocaine on them, a bookshelf of well-worn punk and metal records (including the NIHILISTICS' *Fuck the Human Race*) and copies of Jim Goad's *Answer Me*, posters of old horror movies and GG ALLIN, and a homemade tattoo gun. Now visualize the music that would form out of this amalgamation and you can get an idea of the sound and ethos behind this band. *Torture Rock* (the title is quite appropriate) is the second album by the SLICE 'EM UPS and delivers a heavy punch of metal punk, fronted by a powerful female singer, with lyrics of a general bleak outlook on life and hating the masses of stupid people. If this is at all your reality, you need to track this down! (BG)

(Wrecked)

WILD BILLY CHILDISH AND THE SPARTAN DREGGS – "Forensic R'N'B" CD

With WILD BILLY CHILDISH leading the pack you pretty much know what to expect. Except that title is misleading because he isn't. With the SPARTAN DREGGS CHILDISH is playing bass, leaving the guitar playing and singing to NEIL PALMER formerly of FIRE DEPT. Even still this has CHILDISH's stamp all over it. The SPARTAN DREGGS previously went under the name the VERMIN POETS. Fourteen songs of introspective primitive rock'n'roll. Sounds kind of innocent, yet really knowledgeable at the same time. Great stuff. (CK)

(Damaged Goods)

COBRA SKULLS – "Agitations" CD

The much-missed (from the pages of *MRR*… not this mortal coil) Andy Darling loved this band. I think they were his favorite of the last ten years. This band has everything he loves…soaring choruses and a sound that melds equal parts AGAINST ME, CLASH, later ONE MAN ARMY and the buzzsaw pop-punk of TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET. This LP has more of the Fat sheen than their earlier gear, but I think that's the sound the band has always strived for. Andy is gonna shit for this… For me? It's just too perfect. The band is a tight knit touring/recording machine… They can play a basement or the main stage at Warped equally as proficiently. I get it and they kill at what they do…it's just not punk enough for me (see LOS EXPLOSIVOS review!)…Still the best Fat release in recent years. (TB)

(Fat Wreck Chords)

JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN III / FOLLOWED BY STATIC – split LP

JOHN WESLEY COLEMAN: Garage psych alternative sorta punk rock. The first song was fuzzed out and all over the place. The second song (which is the title track) is a little more straightforward and has got some good melodies. It sounds like a collaboration between DANIEL JOHNSTON and the EVAPORATORS. Sometimes I get a little lost, cause it sounds like he's just shouting a couple phrases over a riff that lasts for four minutes or him just making "om" noises over another several minutes of music. I like the title track, but will pass on the rest. FOLLOWED BY STATIC sounds like a less dynamic more alternative rock DEADLY SNAKES. Simple, guitar organ bass alternative indy rock. (P$)

(Way Out There)

COLONIX – "Nuclear" EP

This is my first encounter with this band, that is straight ahead punk with snotty vocals that was common during the '90s BLANKS 77 era. Sadly, this release lacks something, it is just too straight forward and falls flat. Hopefully their next release will be a bit more interesting. (MS)

(self-released)

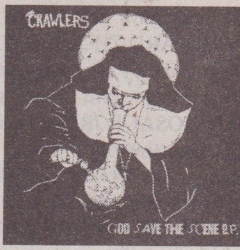
CONDOMINIUM – "Warm Home" LP

I know I always try to over academicize records

in a way that suggests to listening to them in a manner that they were never meant to be listened to in, and it often comes off as just ignorant and/or pointless, but I could care less. I do this for me, and who is anyone to tell me how to listen to a record? In my mind, music is all about tones and "tone," and this here LP, should be in the annals of history in this regard. I have listened to *Warm Home* countless times over the last three or so weeks, and it's ability to capture an attitude, a place in time, an emotion, and a mood has left me nothing but impressed. Like, how they got such an ugly, gritty, dirty, gross-feeling recording out of such clean instrument tones I will never grasp, but they did. The interplay between guitar, bass, vocals, and drums is most perfect and apparent on this platter in the first song, "Life is Amazing." The bass pretty much leads the whole record but doesn't ever overshadow, because the vocals, which seems to have the most distortion of any element here, are always the most up front, while the guitar is meandering around on its own, always following but never really on a leash and right with it, and most often is creating a kind of flourish or finish. If you are looking for a concise album and can hack hardcore pregnant with a mid-'80s noiserock thud, turn to CONDOMINIUM. (JU)
(self-released)

COP WARMTH – "Die Slow" EP

This band is reminiscent of some of the more stubbornly esoteric bands on Amphetamine Reptile records in the '90s. Imagine a group being influenced by the sound of SCRATCH ACID—only heard through the wall of the adjoining practice space, when David Yow was singing through a megaphone and an amplifier was picking up some radio signals from a plane flying overhead, and you might not be able to imagine what this group sounds like because that description is mildly absurd, but so is this record. These are strongly recommended jams for neo no wave/noise rock à la COWS or TAR. (SL)
(In the Red)


CRAWLERS
GOD SAVE THE SCENE E.P.

THE CRAWLERS – "God Save the Scene" CD

This album is a discography tacked on to the end of a new EP. The band plays straightforward hardcore punk in an '80s vein. They don't do many breakdowns and the songs are generally faster and POISON IDEA rock'n'roll influenced. If TSOL had started in '88 they probably would have sounded a lot like this. And seriously, the cover is a drawing of a nun taking a bong hit. You probably would rather listen to this while fucked up but you start sobering up by the end. There are 29 songs on the fucking thing. What the hell kind of stoner work ethic is that? (BL)
(Stealth Ordeal)

CRAZY BAND – "Fuck You" LP

I heard about this band before hearing anything musically, which isn't always a good thing. Reading about a band in a fashion magazine before they even have a tape out? Weeeird… but I guess that's what happens if you are a band in LA. Anyway, CRAZY BAND is a bunch of stoner girl skaters, including a former member of MIKA MIKO (Jenna, one of the singers), making an LP that is an explosion of ideas and venom and inside jokes. Apparently they all picked instruments they had never played before, and while it doesn't sound like the unorganized mess you would expect, it does have a sense of freedom and snot, total exuberant fuck you appeal. This is easily my fave post-MIKA MIKO band. It has a similar brat attack up all night rager sound. Less beach punk Agnew brothers though, but more like a well-connected, well adjusted art school drop out, LA girl ELECTRIC EEL. More like KLEENEX trying to play a *Thrasher Skate Rock* tape, and then the saxophone on "Drop Out" makes me think of ESSENTIAL LOGIC at their most punk/least experimental. CRAZY BAND does not identify as feminists and they are not an all girl band, so don't go thinking they are some Riot Grrl revival situation just cuz it's mostly girls. I feel like they are more into GG ALLIN than BIKINI KILL. They seem like a band who weren't going for a sound other than what they could come up with, and thus it rules. It's not some lame carbon copy of a previous band idea or genre, but rather it's own thing. (LG)
(Teenage Teardrops)

CROOKED CROSS – "Father Jack" EP

This shit is raw. I mean fucking *raw*, like you're all coked up and have been going at it for hours, raw. New-ish band from Georgia that plays some vile hardcore that sounds to me like AEROSOLS meets one of those bedroom black metal projects on Youth Attack, but with the amps turned up to eleven. This is punishing stuff. As you might have gathered from their name, all the songs are about religion and you can feel the church-hate as soon as the needle drops. Track this down; you won't regret it. (KM)
(Video Disease)

CRY HAVOC – "A Feast for the Crows" LP

The further I get into this record the more I am digging on these crusty Brits. CRY HAVOC is a couple years old but I previously hadn't heard them. I immediately started nodding my head and by the time the rocking metal-tinged solos and gallop-y breakdowns hit, I was ready to hoist my fist in the air but didn't because I'm in a room full of people and it would be awkward. Total hard rock/classic metal influenced crust that sounds more Scandinavian than British (which is a good thing as far as I'm concerned). And the cover art has a rad flying grim reaper and raven motif; along with some photos of the band making their live shows look fun and gnarly. Killer first impression—can't wait for the second. (BL)
(Phobia / Active Rebellion / Anitköerper)

CUTTING LOSSES
ENDLESS

CUTTING LOSSES – "Endless" EP

Predictable modern NYHC from Austin, Texas. Features mandatory Sailor Jerry rip off cover art and tough-guy-gone-drama-queen lyrics about being a "lonely man" but persevering through it all 'cause you've got the "heart of a lion!" On the upside, it comes with a download card so you can rock it on your iPod at the gym. (JH)
(Metastasis)

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY / DEFECT DEFECT / FOREIGN OBJECTS – split 12"

DEFECT DEFECT opens this record up with a song that changed my mind about them. I was kind of on the fence before this, but "People My Age" is a bumpin' tune. DEFECT DEFECT plays fairly straight ahead driving punk with an oddly distinctive singer whose voice seems to ride over the music as much as it fits into the mix. DAYLIGHT ROBBERY is darkly melodic and creates entrancing vocal melodies. I'm also a sucker for their kind of light and choppy guitar work with little distortion. The vocal trade off that starts off "Flat City" is a dead goddamn ringer for X, especially with the male vocals. FOREIGN OBJECTS rounds off this split with two tunes that sound like they are of the era of the second 7". I like dirtiness in the recording (my only real gripe with the 12") and the totally catchy guitar hooks. Their songs are by far the shortest on the record and end it well with their direct, aggressive lyrics and singing, tight and basic rhythm section, and the aforementioned catchy guitar. In all, these songs are good, but I'm kind of turned off by the one sided 12"-ness of it. (LP)
(Dirt Cult)

DBCR
TWO (2) SONG E.P.

DBCR – "Two (2) Song E.P." EP

Fuck, where's the bong when I really need it? This shit makes me wanna pack it up and blaze away. I've never heard

of these guys before (one of them used to be in AWKWARD THOUGH, if that's worth anything to you), but they are totally channeling the '90s northwest grunge spirit. The A-side is an upbeat song à la DINOSAUR JR, kinda similar to that SUN GOD EP that came out a couple years ago. Side b slows things down to a dirge-y MELVINS style slog. Lyrically the two both seem to convey the fuck society outlook rather effectively. (BD)
(self-released)

DEATH TOKEN – "All Dreams Are Nightmares" LP

Jesus Christ. The full length from these long-running Copenhagen punkers is here and it's a freakin' scorcher. The basis of most of these songs is Dis-core with heavy guitar, pummeling drums, and scathing vocals. But fortunately for those with a low tolerance for monotony, DEATH TOKEN has a lot more tricks up their sleeve. The first song, "War and Order," rips out of the gate like a Japanese-Scandinavian hardcore hybrid, but as the songs unfold, further influences and elements creep in, like strange guitar and vocal effects and Tom Warrior/HELLHAMMER leads. Being this diverse, it's bound to ruffle the feathers of the D-beat/noise/distort orthodoxy, and not all of it works perfectly. But if you're like me, it's a welcome change from the often-mindless banality of those genres, while still retaining many of the elements that attracted us to that stuff in the first place. Recommended. (JH)
(Adult Crash)

DEMERIT / SS20 – split 10"

China's burgeoning punk scene is starting to produce some real fucking noise, and despite a few faults, DEMERIT is an excellent ambassador. This stuff is a little stylistically unfocused, but the leads are impeccable and the heavy parts could be ripped from a mid-'90s Japanese scene comp. They have a tendency to slide off into STRUNG OUT-style grooviness, but I would listen to this again, melodic parts and all, especially the opening track, "Walking Out of Fog." Germany's SS20 is solid, if unremarkable hardcore, with some great scathing vocals and a lot of melodic leads. (AU)
(Tenzenmen / Genjing / Kawaii / Up The Punx! / Narm Discos / Pope's Ass / Wifagena)

DISPEPSIAA / SAKATAT – EP

DISPEPSIAA from Brazil and SAKATAT from Turkey both play a nice brand of old school grindcore. DISPEPSIAA's take on grindcore is somewhat in the vein of middle-era PHOBIA—fast and tight but old school grindcore. Sad to see the band is already broken up because I'd love to hear more stuff from them. SAKATAT plays a noisier, sloppier, wonderful old school grindcore sound. A good comparison is their cover of SORE THROAT'S "Filthchain," which serves as a perfect example of what they sounds like. Well, that and old SOB. This is one of the better 7" I've heard in a while. (MH)
(Bringer of Gore)

DOOM SIREN / ISKRA – split LP

I didn't realize ISKRA was still around—I still don't really like them. They play a pretty standard Scandinavian style similar to IMMORTAL, it's definitely not bad, but it doesn't really stand out to someone that listens to a lot of black metal. I'd imagine for crust kids that want to dip their toes into the murky abyss, but need the same warm and fuzzy lyrics that line up with their ideals it's perfect. Personally, I appreciate the all out nihilistic, fuck the world/destroy humankind approach. There are three originals and a MARDUK cover, another middle of the road band that is just there. DOOM SIREN goes for a BOLT THROWER styled death metal thing, but seriously just suck, they play like shit and the songs are boring, that's all I can really say about this side. (AH)
(Eat Lead)

DOTTIE DANGER – "Krom!" CD

DOTTIE DANGER, from St. Petersburg, Russia, has a sound that falls somewhere between new-school melodic hardcore and triumphant harmonic-chorded crust-pop with a singer who bellows like a more laid back BORN AGAINST-era Sam McPheeters. They also incorporate long, noodle-y guitar interludes and creepy spoken word parts that usually bore the shit out of me, but they make it work. Overall, this is a solid CD, except for the unfortunate BLACK FLAG cover of "Slip It In." (GH)
(More Than Sounds)

EGG CHEF – "Opinions are Meaningless in the Void" EP

Frenetic artsy hardcore that jerks back and forth from barrel-organ circus oompa-loompa punk to ironic post-Gravity screamo blur. Musically there are flashes of catchy songwriting, but the songs themselves never settle on a hook long enough for it to become memorable. For fans of: very sugary cereal, low attention spans, DEVO at 78RPM. (AM)
(Apop)

EISBERG – "Fuck Each Other" EP

These guys formed in Boston but they're all originally from Europe. Do I really need to say more? Modern sXe hardcore littered with palm muting and lyrics about status whores and keeping the scene alive! This is incredibly predictable stuff, but not entirely without merit. The band is tight and the recording is strong, but this kind of hardcore does absolutely nothing for me. If you still "X-up" before shows however, you'll love this. (KM)
(Holy Roar)

ELECTED OFFICIALS – "Beyond Corrupt" CD

Fast but not hardcore female fronted punk. It's full of not very interesting political and social commentary. Very '90s sounding and maybe comparable to NAKED AGGRESSION but boring and generic. Yawn. (RO)
(self-released)

EMPTY HEADS – "Get Real Dumb/Josie"

For some folks blown out pop punk is just little air disturbances in their ears. Others take it in with a religious awe. Whatever brand of punk you celebrate the artillery firing on the A-side of this will endure on mix tapes and be celebrated publicly. Think MEAN JEANS but more blown out. In other words, a cross between catchy driving pop punk with the RETAINERS production. A song that calls out to the souls of pop punk and garage fans alike. While the A-side ("Get Real Dumb") will have the pump primed, the B-side won't quite have you firing on all cylinders. (P$)
(Fatal Seizure)

ETÆ – "All Possibilities Will Come From There" LP

This is a very nice '97-'01 discography of this long running Hakodate City hardcore band who do a kind of B-list "Burning Spirits" style. When he gets a chance to lead, the drummer really kills and some of the guitar lines are just fucking awesome but this band has always lacked the kind of essential *heft* that the really great bands in this style have. The bland vocals have a role in that, as do the somewhat mediocre hooks, but don't let this review fool you: they're probably still better than whatever garbage you're listening to right now. Not being as good as JUDGEMENT or DEATH SIDE is nothing to be ashamed of, and I'd still rather listen to this five times in a row than the latest Bridge 9 release once. There are some really fucking cool tracks on here, and it's well worth seeking out. (AU)
(La Familia)

LOS EXPLOSIVOS – "Primeras Grabaciones" CD

Ugly lilting garage rock from the depths of Mexico played by a bunch of kids who don't look old enough to shave. They have the '60s swagger of ol' BILLY CHILDISH but the punk shits of the MOTARDS or the REATARDS. The sounds of a hard night on the Mexican tiles with a belly full of prescription pills and cheap tequila. Punk. As. Fuck. (TB)
(Boss Hoss)

FAITH – "Subject to Change Plus First Demo" CD

Along with the SCREAM LP and *The Year in 7"s*, I always thought it was a mistake for Dischord to not keep this in print on vinyl, and I am beyond excited for the return of its availability (despite this being a review of the CD, it is in fact back in print on vinyl as well). In case you haven't heard this record, this is where the FAITH expands on the melodic side of their sound, and I consider it to be the link between earlier DC hardcore—and the FAITH's darker sound in particular—and what was to come with bands such as RITES OF SPRING and DAG NASTY, and to a lesser extent, the more melodic youth crew bands that followed towards the end of the decade. All but one of the demo songs are from the FAITH/VOID split, and the same songs get painted in somewhat darker, heavier, and angrier light that, ironically, might have made this recording a better match for VOID's psychotic sensibilities. A few of Dischord's CD re-masters have attempted to use more recent technology to "improve" the sound (I remember being bothered by the louder bass on the MINOR THREAT CD reissue of a few years ago), but I noticed no difference between *Subject to Change* here and that on a CD copy of the FAITH/VOID split. I won't be able to do a direct vinyl-to-vinyl comparison, but Dischord's website states that unlike their CD re-masters, their vinyl re-masters make no effort to alter the sound of the original. (DG)
(Dischord)

FANATICS / REFORM CONTROL – "High Altitude Hardcore" split LP

Two of Colorado's most aggressive drug addled exports from the '90s have reunited to bring us this shredding slab. FANATICS were some of my favorite people to party with back then, and I felt like none of their recordings did their live fury any justice…clearly time has not mellowed these maniacs, and they have spent the last decade honing studio chops. "Recognize The Foe" has never sounded so brutal. REFORM CONTROL was cut from the same mold—sunbaked, light speed hardcore crust/grind. These bands were for fans of WORD SALAD, CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, LOGICAL NONSENSE and the like, but went sadly underappreciated during their initial reign(s), hopefully that wrong will start to be righted with this release. (WN)
(Reformed / Legion Productions / Bad People)

FAN ZUI XIANG FA – "Garbage" EP

Excellent 1982-by-way-of-2002 hardcore from Beijing, China with bucketloads of manic energy being delivered by ex-members of Sweden's DS-13 and China's SI DOU LE. Six tracks reminiscent of DS-13 in it's youthful, high energy, delivered with tight, precise musicianship that might even skew towards being a little more complex and inventive. Great breaks before plunging into head on, straight ahead hardcore. Yet, this twists the formula a bit, with lyrics in both Chinese and English (with translations) concerning government cover-ups, conformity, the disposable nature of things in our society and putting politics into action. If you haven't put the bandana that far back in the closet to pull it out, dust it off, strap it back on your forehead, then crank this way up and start diving off your bed! Killer! (KS)
(Genjing / Kawaii / Crapoulet / Narm Discos / World Won't Listen / Tenzenmen / Up The Punx / DIY / Punk Deluxe)

THE FILTHY CHEATERS – "Wake the Dead" CD

Alcohol fueled punk rock'n'roll that brings to mind NASHVILLE PUSSY, but without the boobies. There is one song about alcohol, pussy and rock'n'roll, it's called "Liquor, Pussy & Rock'n'Roll," but no boobs in this band. There is at least one beard, but still, no breasts…and the guitarist isn't as ripping as the one from NASHVILLE PUSSY (who, incidentally, has boobs). Even though FILTHY CHEATERS throws in some rudimentary thrashing punk bits, this disc is rather yawn inducing, and it's not just the inane subject matter (I am familiar with, and friendly to, the redneck subculture, ask anyone who knows me), it is the uninspired presentation of said subject matter. If you're going to sing about pussy, then you need to make your songs fast and tight, ya dig? And the RAMONES cover at the end of the disc is the musical equivalent to surgically adding a third boob to an otherwise only marginally attractive woman in the hopes of making her sexy. (WN)
(self-released)

FLESH LIGHTS – "Muscle Pop" LP

These guys may have defined their own sound with the title of the LP. It sums it up just about right. It's rock'n'roll, it's pop, it's garage, it's punk. It's all of those things. It's also damn good, partly because of the quality of the music and partly because of the energy they bring. Most LPs can't hold my attention for more than a couple of songs, regardless of how good they are. This is one the exceptions to that rule. Highest recommendation. (KK)
(Twistworthy)

FUCK KNIGHTS – "Let it Bleed" CD

Some quick Internet research reveals that this is what appears to be this band's first full-length recording, but shit do they have a ton of EPs and splits and shit. I'll go ahead and say that they have a pretty stupid name, but the music isn't half-bad. If you regularly read my reviews (not sure why you would, though) you may have noticed I'm not really into the whole garage rock thing, so when I say it's not half-bad, its probably akin to others saying it's pretty good. This might be what the 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS would have sounded like if they came along well after the early days of punk. If you're into garage-y, psychedelic rock'n'roll, this one's for you. (BD)
(Boss Hoss)

THE GARRISON – "Subversion" CD

The only (Malaysian) band that matters. In all seriousness, the GARRISON has taken the CLASH songbook and turned it to their own ends. Slashing guitars, rabble-rousing lyrics, and the odd reggae song thrown in—check. The singer even sounds *a lot* like Strummer. No, it's not that original, but they do it better than most. I bet they are great live. They probably draw a big crowd as well. They remind me a bit of Bay Area band LA PLEBE in that way. The graphics in the booklet are funny and clever as well. I can't really overstate how well they capture the CLASH sound. The four or five reggae tracks are a bit cod, and the album ends with a flaccid acoustic protest ballad, but the punk songs are energetic, sharp, and well crafted. This band is well worth watching. If they were American they'd probably be on Alternative Tentacles and touring with LEFTOVER CRACK or whoever, and blowing them off the stage. Great stuff. (AM)
(Knot)

GATEWAY DISTRICT – "Perfect's Gonna Fail" CD

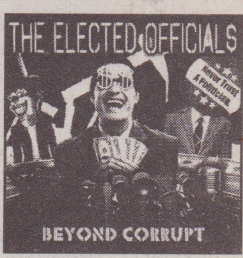
I prefer reviewing records I don't like because I come across as being less twee. However, this is a solid, gutsy and hearty sophomore album from these Minnesotans. These guys have a defined ballsy, Midwest punk style laced with punching pop elements and tales of not only woe, but also optimism that everyone can relate to. If you liked their first album, you will love this as their songwriting skills have only tightened and matured. (GG)
(It's Alive)

GEFFIKA / SKIMASK – split LP

SKIMASK. What the fukk is this? The band is made up of drums, vocals and a mouth. But it sounds like CHROME on 'ludes. Definitely punk as shit, though I'm not sure if I like it or not. The vocals are absently howled in that "I'd rather be doing something else but I'm probably too wasted to be bothered" sort of way, and the sounds that accompany the drums are a psychedelic wall of whirs and vaguely synth sounding treatments of a dude's vocal chords. Extra credit for thinking outside of the box (or, in this case, away from the guitar). GEFFIKA take a slower approach, struggling to crank out two tracks of sleep inducing (and SLEEP worshipping) lo-fi drone noise in the form of heavy guitar/drum doom. Emphasis on "lo-fi," as that is indeed the downfall of this side of the split, with proper production and/or presentation this could be a monster, but instead it is an interesting collection of sounds in the form of an incomplete vision. Truly one of the most thought provoking records that has crossed my ears in a while. (WN)
(Sophomore Lounge)

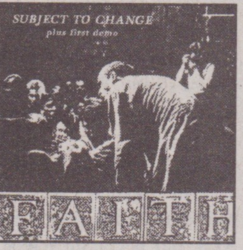
GERM ATTAK – "Fear of the Unknown" LP

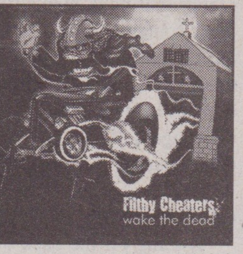
Who gives a fuck if it's original or not—it's good. It's nothing you haven't heard before on GERM ATTAKs 76,476,565 previous releases and a music video or two, but they have their own sound that they stick to and if you liked recent GERM ATTAK, this is that. These guys are good at what they play, which is punk, and only punk. If you like well done sounds reminiscent of BLITZ or the SQUATS, then you'll like this. It's upbeat with catchy riffs and choruses. It takes everything you like about 1980s British punk and regurgitates it in Ottawa in



PRIMERAS GRABACIONES

EXPOSURE
A Record By The Masculine Journey





2011. I appreciate that they're playing this style of music sans the fake British accents Portland punx are so fond of when trying to mimic this style of '82. Comes with a giant fold out poster. Pogo on it. (AE)
(Loud Punk)

GERM ATTAK – "Lockdown/Is this Really Hell?" EP

I'm not sure how much this super simple, stripped down UK82, No Future / Secret records styled street punk sound appeals to me when it's this sparkling, and *squeaky* clean. The second tune, "Is this Really Hell?" is faster than "Lockdown" and fares much better than that tune for me. This flexi is only available with the mailorder edition of the *Fear of the Unknown* LP (also reviewed in this ish) and not available on its own. (JU)
(Loud Punk)

GET LAID / NOW DENIAL – "Hungrier Than The Wolf" split EP

What an odd record. We begin with NOW DENIAL... Their side opens sounding like someone took rock'n'roll-y hardcore and filtered through downers and *Bullhead*-era MELVINS. It's actually oppressively slow, but the guitar licks (I swear) just make me confused. Then, the song ends with a gang chorus. Buh-waaahhhhh? I guess they are from Boston. There's more of the same on track two, but with some emo-hardcore tint a la YAPHET KOTTO. GET LAID is a more straightforward hardcore band with a noodley rock'n'roll guitarist who sometimes wants to be in a frantic '90s hardcore band. The lyrics have this weird ESL feel to them, which is possible as this band is also from Boston, a major port city, but the singer doesn't seem to have any kind of accent, and I couldn't check their website because it kept crashing my browser. Their last song is about *The NeverEnding Story*. There was also a pog in the record sleeve. Fucking weird. (LP)
(Get Young)

GHOST KNIFE – "Kill shelter, yes!" CD

With moments of euphoric harmonies and intricate anthemic poppiness that rivals the ARRIVALS, this is classic Wiebe. Though, this is a pleasant surprise from Pfeffer and Snakepit. This is nutsy enough to be considered punk in attitude, yet it transcends that punk mentality musically. The opening track contains the line "that is not the thing to say to someone that you want to fuck," which made me totally LOL, dudes. Solid debut that wouldn't be out of place being released by Recess. Texas gets the job done, again. (GG)
(End Sounds)

GIUDA – "Number 10/Crazee"

Coming off the back of their amazing debut LP comes a new two-track single from Italy's most well groomed boot boys, GIUDA. If you ain't familiar with the sound, expect some EQUALS glammed-up soul, SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS' terrace agro, and a crafty sliding tackle of Sharpie attitude. Drop this two platter into any DJ set with a heavy sta-press crowd and try to distinguish between the authentic and the fresh cut, no chance. Not a single original riff or hook to be seen, but originality has always been the tool of the student wanker elite and as long as we have ROY THE ROVERS, MURPHYS MOB, TOP OF THE POPS and GIUDA, then the kids are surely alright. (SD)
(Surfing'Ki)

GLORYWHORE – "Loveletterbomb" CD

Consider if Kim Shattuck's voice wasn't as good as it is, then pair it with NOFX bass lines fresh out of 1985. This is accompanied with generic, yet droning and somewhat dark pop punk, that has that undeniable "best of the '90s" feel, so fucking common on these CD-only releases I get to review. Some fifteen-year-old is going to love this for sure. (GG)
(self-released)

GOD GIVEN ASS – "Checking If They're Still Alive" EP

Maybe one of the worst band names of any band I've reviewed. They're from Finland. They have nice punk clothes. They suck. The tempos remind me of the MARKED MEN and the VICIOUS. Side one's better and that's not saying much. Side two has the worst punk (not even) ballad. It's even got harmonica. Shoot me. (RO)
(Monsp)

GOD GIVEN ASS – "Was I Really There?" EP

This is a retroactive review of this band's debut release from 2009. Comprised of guys and gals, this five-piece rock'n'roll band from Helsinki, Finland rocks pretty hard! My first thoughts were that these guys sound *a lot* like MURDER CITY DEVILS, which is a good thing in my opinion. There is also a bit of that Scandinavian r'n'r vibe here that I'm sure is somewhat regional; similar to bands like the HELLACOPTERS and even more so like TURBONEGRO at times. This definitely gets my attention and makes me wanna check out their new "Checking If They're Still Alive" EP that has also been sent in for review this month... (ML)
(Monsp)

GODORRHOEA – "Zeitgeist" EP

What the fuck is this? Seriously, this is weird. There's a bunch of bass noodling and shitty fuzzed out guitar and cartoony screams—kind of an alternate-reality version of the MINUTEMEN. Keep in mind that in that reality, *MRR* is a toilet paper company and I can fly and turn invisible. It's weird. These dudes know how to play though and the rhythm section holds it down. The drums are heavy on the toms in a way that keeps building the songs up and the bass player is all over the place like some kind of prog band type. There are lyrics included but I can't tell what the fuck the guy is screaming, it's incoherent. The sound quality isn't the best and some of the songs are recorded live at a show. I guess this is a posthumous release of everything they could get their hands on. It's a pretty strange bunch of songs, not straightforward punk rock at all but noisy and chaotic. It was probably a fun band to play in but a little too wacky for me. Sorry dudes, I hate it. (BL)
(Loony Tunes)

GOLDEN HELMETS / JIZZLOBBERS – split EP

The GOLDEN HELMETS (is that a cock reference?) kick off this split with some good old Hammond-laced, '60s garage punk, in a style akin to a less energetic HIVES. Decent, though lacks a little energy on record, which I would imagine that these guys make up for live. On side b, the tastefully named JIZZLOBBERS get things warmed up with riffs not dissimilar to something off the first MARKED MEN album, yet with clichéd "oh's," "ooh's," "woo's," and predictable choruses. Their second song is a total turn around from promising to the LIVING END. You almost had something really awesome boys, don't give up! (GG)
(Timme Heie Humme)

GRITO – "Terror y Sangre" CD

GRITO is Mexico's answer to basketball jersey, leg tattooed, metal hardcore where I'm sure the pits are wild and people pile up on top of each other to shout during the choruses. Musically, this is similar to later period AGNOSTIC FRONT, DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR, and that sort of thing. This CD, their third full-length I believe, comes with a bonus disc of live and documentary video footage. (BG)
(Puercords)

HAGAR THE WOMB – "A Brighter Shade of Black" LP

Awesome! This LP is a collection of both HAGAR THE WOMB 12"s and a comp track. This band is so good! HAGAR THE WOMB was a UK anarcho-punk band from the early '80s. Their music has a lot of similarities to POISION GIRLS, ZOUNDS and other bands that were part of that scene, but HAGAR's approach feels a lot more light-hearted. They weren't goofy, but their music feels colorful in an otherwise gray and emotionally bleak scene. Hence the aptly named title to this retrospective: *A Brighter Shade Of Black*. The cover to their second album *Funnery in a Nunnery* is a perfect visual to illustrate the music they create. It depicts some slobs playing music while a huge group of nuns riot in a church. That is what their music is like. You need this. (FS)
(Mississippi)

HEADLINES – "Wake Up" EP

This here EP consists of four songs of super-pop pop punk. The title track on this one is the best of the four, sounding pretty dead on like BIG DRILL CAR but with more nasal vocals and some PSYCHEDELIC FURS style saxophone harmonies. Unfortunately the band manages to suffer from novelty overkill like the over-the-top harmonica, more saxophone and some pretty cheesy guitar solos. All of that being a shame because the songs themselves are pretty catchy tunes. (PA)
(Goodwill)

THE HELLTONS – "Panic Attacks" CD

You gotta love a band who in their thanks list, as well as the likes of bands such as TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET and the APERS, give a nod to WANK FOR PEACE. Best name for a band I've stumbled across this year. They may be French, but they have that snotty pop punk sound pretty down. SCREECHING WEASEL/QUEERS territory (though as is seem to be the case with many Europunks, the vocalist's English seems far superior to most all of the products of an American education. So good, that five different labels seem to have released this disc. (RK)
(Can I Say?)

HOAX – "Down" EP

HOAX hit this side of the country recently and played some shows that left folks talking. This is their second record and it smokes. Be prepared for a very dark, thick, pounding sound that goes for the throat. These songs stick and with more than one listen you will be left wanting to hear it over and over again. Great! (MS)
(Youth Attack)

HOLOKAUST / RATTUS – split EP

Slapped in a ultra-crustified cover of skulls, bullets and band photos, this final release from the original line up of Finnish legends RATTUS commemorated their final live appearance in September at Los Angeles's California Discord fest, with three new songs that highlight that the band—always experimenting over the course of decades— has never really stopped evolving. Parts surface the melody riffed, guitar-driven hardcore of their classic 1980's records, but fumble a little in their complexity and a modern recording that doesn't ever seem to pull a cohesive direction to the attack. The bass plunks, the drums hammer, and the vocals have a really uneven delivery. Add in all the different influences—from modern metal to classic '77 style moves—and it's just slightly off and sort of just rambles and stews. But you know what? RATTUS were *fan-fucking-tastic* in LA, and are still one of the world's greatest punk bands. *Ever*. So I'll keep spinning this—like any of their diehard fans—to try to glean their inspiration. Lyrics are Finnish with no translation. On the flip, Los Angeles' HOLOKAUST delivers three solid, meaty standard issue DISCHARGE blasts. These tracks distinguish themselves in the basic, wadded up crunch that the guitars get in their semi-lo-fi recording—a recording akin to the happy accidents of '90s crust records, as opposed to a current intentionally lo-fi noise fest. The drums sturdily roll around this thick, dumpy chunk of simple riffs, as the vocals blast standard issue punk declarations over the din "Brainwashed into Submission!" "Waves of Fire! Mushroom cloud! Incinerated!" making for a familiarly satisfying, two fingers in the air, dose of good punk rock fun. (KS)
(Rotten To The Core)

HOOLIGAN – "Prodigal Son" CD

Plodding, thinly recorded rock'n'roll. Trying to discover if it's a bad AC/DC, a mediocre CLASH, or a lack luster RUTS. No energy equals any quality. (SD)
(Advance)

HUMILITATE – "Total Harrok Eriya" CD

Fast, pissed HC from Basque country Spain. I saw them play this summer and they did a POISON IDEA cover and on this CD they do a MUNICIPAL WASTE cover as well— this should give you an indication of what you are in for… This is fastcore, hardcore with a big thrash metal influence. This is almost but not quite crossover. You can also hear moments galloping Euro crust in here with some PIG CHAMPION inspired solos, hints of straight Nardcore, and appearances of proggy stoner guitar among the thrashy riffs. There are two vocalists, one of which used to be in VIOLENT HEADACHE. What results is a nice blend of distinct yet complimentary intertwining and chorused moments—no "meow meow meow, bark bark bark." The band takes some really interesting elements of styles (and "cores," if you will) that might not meld well if done poorly, yet they nail it. This is a solid release and worth checking out if this is your jam. (MB)
(self-released)

HUNGRY GAYZE – "Road Kill" EP

Holy crap, the art. Holy crap, the name. OK moving on…debut single from Orlando, FL punks from various bands I haven't heard of. This is pretty "annoying" thump-thump wacky-synth music topped off with boy-girl vocals joining in unison to commit a snarl not unlike a teen-age HUNX AND HIS PUNX. However, I actually think they're keeping the ball moving towards the finish line with appropriately scrappy guitar on "Pins and Needles" and succinct shrieking on "Road Kill." I was slightly confused if this was maybe a split because the B-side "8th Grade Haircut" is so different. It's exactly like the aforementioned sounds, but like, accidentally on 33RPM…slowed down sludge-y vocals over a more primitive-garage track. I feel more partial to the latter but I commend the sheer annoyingness of the first half of this single as well. (JS)
(Florida's Dying)

HYENA – "Breathing Death, Rotting Flesh" EP

Weird, creepy crawl, sludgy, metallic hardcore with Dwid-esqe vocals. This shit is ugly as a motherfucker in an EYEHATEGOD meets HIS HERO IS GONE way. Totally feeling this. Mean as shit. (TB)
(Shit! Attack / Rising Riot)

THE IMPOSTERS – "Down By The Bay" EP

Unique teenage surf punk that's hard to pin down but easy to listen to. Bangin' like thunder clouds with varying tempos at varying times, and what sounds like a wide range of influences ranging from poppy blues riffs interpreted via adolescent musings to subtle surf riffs. Life's a beach with the IMPOSTERS. (P$)
(Headcount)

IRONY BUTTERFLY – "Oceanography" EP

While IRONY BUTTERFLY most certainly fall on the more indie side of things, there's a certain homespun charm about this record that's impossible to miss. Flirtations with psych, punk and pop all come together with varying degrees of success here. "On Wisconsin" is really frantic DIY pop and certainly the winner of the three tunes here. An odd little single, though not without merit. (MC)
(Little Pablo)

JÄRNMALM – "SKÖRDAR & SÅR" CD

While my knowledge of Swedish punk isn't the sharpest around these parts, I would say that most Swedish hardcore/punk that I have heard is good, if not awesome. Admittedly, that is a pretty stark generalization, especially knowing that there are terrible bands in every genre and region. This band isn't terrible, but they're not that awesome. I dunno if these folks would identify as metal, but the riffage coupled with the ballad type songs with classical style solos have me thinking that is what they are going for. (BD)
(Border Music)

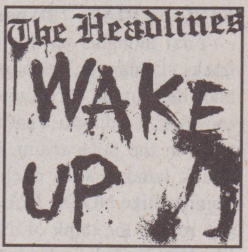
THE KAMALAS – "The Great Hallucination" EP

Certain aspects of this are great: The high energy this EP kicks off with is reminiscent of the first CARBONAS record played out to the tune of the MEASURE [SA]. Though, side b loses me with its lack of momentum: with guitar licks almost guilty of being rockabilly, and obvious chick rock, mushy lyrics. (GG)
(Fucking Scam)

KETAMINES – "Line By Line" EP

Fuzz and reverb a-go-go on this new release from prolific 7" dispensers, Hozac records. Fuzz refers to the multiple guitars and reverb refers to the vocals as well as the guitars during the woozy psychedelic solos. Fraught with melodic, space age back up vocals, this release takes cues from the '70s garage-pop sensibility of the REAL KIDS and borrows from the psychedelic aesthetic of the '90s honed by the likes of SPACEMEN 3. The three tracks seem to become increasingly psychedelic. The first,

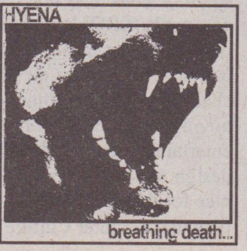
GRITO
terror y sangre



THE HELLTONS
Panic Attack

hooligan
prodigal son

HUMILITATE
TOTAL HARROK ERIYA



"Line By Line" has a definite garage swagger that likely convinced *MRR* it was acceptable to review, the second introduces some heavy-handed psychedelic effects and the B-side is a hopeless wash of severely ignorable psych effects. KETAMINES seems to excel when honing their considerable knack for writing pop songs and abandoning their reverb-reliant aesthetic would definitely increase their longevity and set them apart from others in their massive musical peer group. (SL)
(Hozac)

KING FRIDAY – "Dynamite" EP

First thoughts on this one…slick. The opening track, "Dynamite," is bursting with hooks, "oohs" and "ahs" in the vocals, and just plain slick! Maybe too slick… I dunno. That is such a subjective argument in the punk realm. Back in the '90s, all the "punk bands" were over-produced to hell in my opinion (like NOFX, ALL, etc., etc.), so that's what this makes me think of. Not that I'm saying this is like NOFX. This isn't snotty and obnoxious enough. Maybe more like ALL then… It isn't bad at all, but it just doesn't catch my attention in any way. (ML)
(SP)

KITCHEN'S FLOOR – "Look Forward to Nothing" LP

Australia…what the fuck has got into you??? All of a sudden there's a glut of weirdo shit coming out of the big dusty rock. This band has a weird dreamy hypnotic sound like FEEDTIME mixed with LOOP and X (the Aussie one). It has some of that TY SEGALL/OH SEES fuzz and shimmer too… Music to do drugs to. Boss. (TB)
(Siltbreeze)

KOMATOZ – "Two Hands" LP

Black metal punk from Russia. Not generic boring metal, as their lyrics have insightful mention of the G8 Summit and Russia's petroleum business. Reminds me of PARASYTIC. (AE)
(Aback Distribuce / Papagájův Hlasatel / Waking the Dead / Carambahc Punk / Distrozione / Tanker / MiraVoice / Total Punk /Rarach Katus)

THE KONKS – "TV's Killing Me/Wasn't that Fun"

While this is very much rock'n'roll, it's also very much punk rock. It's sort of mid-tempo and catchy, but it's got an eeriness to it that is pretty cool. The guitar sound reminds me of good ASH (and yes, such a thing does exist.) But it's darker than ASH. This really is good shit. (KK)
(One Eye Open)

MIKE KROL – "I Hate Jazz" 10"

MIKE KROL sits in a chair staring out from the cover of this 10". He looks like the young JOHN DOE, yet even still I immediately expect his music to be emo. It is not. This is super-catchy, peppy pop punk. KROL's voice is abrasive, but also kind of cutesy. The music is harsh with overdriven guitars and screeching electronic keyboards, but it is charming. The combination is bratty, arty and annoying, but it does work musically as a catchy and entertaining record. KROL's "real" job is graphic design so I will also mention the packaging is very nice for this record. (CK)
(Counter Counter Culture)

LA LA VASQUEZ / NEONATES – split EP

Two tracks moving in a more spooky minimal DIY direction for Brighton's LA LA VASQUEZ. "Horror Stories" indulges in an extended plucking no-wave intro only to slide into sudden fuzz-sludge and the group's trademark haunting three-way vocals. "Do It Again, Change This!" meditates on a hypnotic unison between thumping drums and bass and a riff-y dark guitar. Los Angeles' NEONATES takes up the B-side with two tracks of wonky girl no wave. On "Nada" Mary's flippant SoCal sass screeches distantly, "There's something growing inside of me and it's nada baby!" Bassist Gwendolyn joins in dueling vocals for "Beat Around" in a kind of shambolic and teasing meandering, with the guitar seeping out more like a jerky Casio than the usual six-strings of fuck-you. Cool landmarks on the highway of the new international girl underground. Pressed on literally the heaviest vinyl I have ever seen a 7" committed to, and featuring cover art from LLV's bassist/vocalist Merida Richards. (JS)
(Onec)

LAURICE – "Best Of Laurice Vol. 1" LP

Brooklyn's Last Laugh Records is back with a new release on their pre-punk subsidiary Mighty Mouth Music. LAURICE is an über queenie lookin' '70s British singer/songwriter best known amongst '70s pre-punk aficionados as front "man" on the junkshop glam nugget GRUDGE (also reissued on MMM). I gotta say, LAURICE really shines in album form. Pretty diverse sounds ranging from the more expected sugar-y Brit glam *Hit Parade* '70s pop, with one snarling STONES-y blues garage number, and some unexpected rad late pop psych/rock holdovers. To me the 45 was kinda "meh, what's the big deal," but the album really ties LAURICE's concept together making for one of the stronger Brit pre-punk artifacts I've encountered. To be sure, this ain't "hard glam," way more of a '70s pop endeavor, but I for one am glad they put this one in front of me. (GB)
(Mighty Mouth Music)

LESS LIFE – "Today Will Be Ours" LP

By now I have literally heard this band one thousand times. Anecdotaly of course. The same screamy vocals, over the same "emotional" metalcore, with the same off time drumming, and the same guitar squalls, that I was hearing from every band I liked in 1994. Pretty competent for the style, it's just no longer my thing. (JU)
(How Soon is Now)

LIBERTY MADNESS – LP

They're very good at playing their instruments. They're super tight and fast and well recorded. They're sharp dressers. I'm falling asleep as I'm writing this. If you like fast slick guitar solo ridden poppy shit you can have my copy of this record. (RO)
(Kink)

LIVING EYES – "8:15/Climb The Highest Mountain"

Not to be confused with Oakland's LIVING EYES, this is Eugene, OR (nee Portland) based LIVING EYES. Their first record was reviewed in the April 1990 issue of *MRR*, and they are still kickin' over twenty years later. I get to review a lot of "comeback records" by aging has-beens and most of them are bullshit posturing by Kozik punk never-were's made solely so they have some merch to flog at their next bar gig. It is *so refreshing* to hear a record by the same kind of aging never-were's and just get a couple of great no-frills no-bullshit original punk rock songs (A-side is better than the flip) and not have to endure any the tired geezer entitlement BS. There's even a female in the band. As a point of reference I'd prolly compare them to Fred Cole's variety of Portland musical endeavors (the RATS, PIERCED ARROWS, etc.), but these guys are definitely on their own wavelength. I can only hope I'm this cool in another ten years. (GB)
(Rama Lama)

LIVING EYES – "Starve for Agony" EP

LIVING EYES has been a welcome new addition to Bay Area hardcore this year…well, they've at least been great the two or three times I've seen 'em…so it was nice to see this 7" in my review bin, especially since based on what I remember of the demo, it did the band no justice. On this platter these men bring eight solid trax of very modern sounding hardcore. For the most part the tunes lumber around good ol' fashioned mid paced hardcore that has a lot (but not everything) in common with bands that usually fall under the "straightedge hardcore" umbrella, but there are elements from all over, including some blasting. Good stuff that I enjoy most when they are chugging or blasting away. Rather surprised to see this record on Deathwish Inc., but really nothing should be surprising in 2011. (JU)
(Deathwish)

LIQUOR STORE – "Yeah Buddy" CD

Here's how I picture the LIQUOR STORE band meeting where they decided on the cover for this record. "Heh heh heh look at this picture of a naked woman I found on the internet. Heh heh heh. She has big boobs. heh heh heh. We should use this for the cover of the record. Heh heh heh. Yeah, that would be cool. I like boobs. Heh heh heh. And people would be really shocked too." Naturally, this takes place in a suburban rec room while drinking some cheap mass produced beer, each band member taking a turn ogling the photo. Yawn. You know how many records I already have in my collection with well-endowed naked women on the cover? I'd like to see a band have the guts to put themselves naked on a cover for change. That might shock me. The thing about putting a naked woman (or man) on the cover of your record is that you need some sex appeal to back it up. The music should make people want to do it. LIQUOR STORE doesn't have that effect. It is probably because the singer sounds like a pouting brat. He has a very nasally sing-songy style, which works just fine for the singer of a punk rock band, but doesn't really inspire fucking in the streets. Musically the band leans toward arty garage punk. There are slow parts, fast manic parts, controlled chaos and guitar effects. The record starts off constrained like the band is trying hard to be something they aren't. It is when they finally put their guard down toward the end of the CD that things start to get interesting. The best song is "Bud Lite Killers" (second to last song), which starts out with a can opening followed by some gloriously cacoph-

onous noise. The singer loses the brattiness and goes for pained dementia reciting some of those most stupid, albeit very brief lyrics ever. It is pretty great. (CK)
(Almost Ready)

LOBOTOMIA – "Nadaé Como Parece!" LP

I find myself in a common reviewer dilemma… A classic record whose impact on their own life cannot be described in words, but only with memories of a shitty duped tape, hours of stolen beer, bon fires and huffing Freon (yeah that shit happens in the Midwest). This is a re-ish of Sao Paulo Brazil's LOBOTOMIA, a band that had started out playing some straight head hardcore then veered into a sound that *anticipated* crossover with their take on Scani / D-beat hardcore. While some of the nascent sounds were there, their final album in 1989 *Nadaé Como Parece!* marks the bands shift into true crossover (two of the band members have DRI shirts on in the record jacket/lyric sheet, that should give you an indication about what is on here), a move many punk bands were taking at this time. While this album was not as revered as their earlier releases particularly *Só os Mortos Não Reclamam*, luckily for me, labels Black Water and Kämäset Levyt seem to hear what I hear and has reissued this so that we can all get fucking down with this record. A great example of crossover, thrash, speed metal before it got super shitty. Into it! (MB)
(Black Water / Kämäset Levyt)

LOUD SQUIRT – "Déjà vu Revue Blues" EP

It's nice to see that the booming, noisy Euro garage punk scene is still flying high. Seriously, bands like LOUD SQUIRT must grow on trees over there. Screeching, loud as all get out and (thankfully) more rock-minded than rootsy. Quite possibly the best shit of this ilk that I've heard since the first FATALS single. (MC)
(High School Refuse)

LOVELY LITTLE GIRLS – "Glamorous Piles & Puffy Saddlebags" CD

Up your alley and around the corner if '90s/'00s Chicago no wave gets your pasty ass moving. Spastic horns, desperate and strained vocals all set into a sloshing bathtub alongside the floating limbs of CAPTAIN BEEFHEART or maybe even the FLYING LUTTENBACHERS, tussling with middle school band class. I'm more of an "I wanna hold your haaaand" than a "pulled down pants, two stools a day, a full bowl, too much mayonnaise" kind of fella, but hey, maybe those words just sounded like a valentine to *your* ears. Recorded in 2006, released in 2007, not sure why it's hitting our desks in 2011 but there you go. (JS)
(APOP)

LTW / STATE VIOLENCE– split EP

DC's STATE VIOLENCE is a wonderful, distorted haze with strong, D-beat drumming, the occasional breakdown that actually serves to break things down, and tortured, rapid-fire vocals that sound like the dead of war being summoned from within an amp. Comparisons to nearby AGHAST would be apt, and I like both bands, but I like STATE VIOLENCE better. Officially titled LTW, short for LIONS AND TIGERS AND WHALES, capture DIY-as-a-rallying-cry basement show euphoria perfectly in their two songs, with big DC-meets-Florida emo-inspired riffs and what sounds like every member of the band singing every word to every song. I feel like I should be eating vegan chili and garlic bread as I listen to their side. (DG)
(Cricket Cemetery)

THE MAGOOS – "Brigade 55" EP

Attention D-beat lovers! This is some ugly, really ugly, slightly blown out Scandi sounding CRUDE SS vein raw fucking punk from Perth, Australia with gravely mean vocals, a driving rhythm section and menacing guitar. The band is comprised of all Indonesian members from Indonesia, with two thirds of the original members returning to Indonesia. They have a song on a previous release with anti-white oppression lyrics, which seemed to stir some controversy with claims of being "anti-white." Say what you'd like about that but while I don't get down with hate lyrics, given that the white power movement is alive, well and going strong out in AUS and that there doesn't seem to be much response from the punk scene aside from complacency, I think it's punk as fuck… Next time I want a lyric sheet. Great record! If you like good D-beat, hurry up and get it because I heard most of them have already been sold to Japanese punks! (MB)
(Vertex)

THE MASCULINE JOURNEY – "Exposure" EP

Everything about this record screams that this band is at the end of their collective rope, from the drummer sounding like he's trying to play faster than physically capable, to the vocalist sounding like he's stabbing a childhood tormenter to death. It's straightforward, modern hardcore with enough early '80s influence, moody guitar dissonance, purposeful angst, and intelligent anger to keep it well out of "generic" territory. This band's lyrics imply that their name and symbol (the female symbol with arrows extending out of the four corners, as if the male arrow is taking over the world) is tongue in cheek, but if not, then this band will hear plenty about how ridiculous this is. (DG)
(Masculine Journey)

ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES – "Sing In Japanese" CD

Someone is going to Japan? The boys are back with a six-song release of Japanese hits (sung in Japanese) done GIMME style. It's a new twist from these cover vets that actually kind of works. Not that I know any of these songs since my knowledge of Japanese music started with the BLUE HEARTS and ends with Snuffy Smile. Apparently there are more languages on the way. (RL)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

THE MEDIUMS / SOFT TARGETS – "Out Of My Mind/ Zombie Holiday"

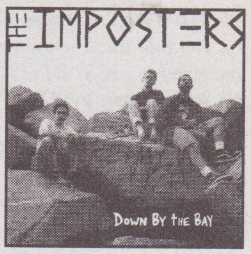
Two peppy garage tunes. The MEDIUMS '60s styled "Out Of Mind" has a well-worn title and theme. Fortunately, it is catchy as hell so I can easily overlook the obviousness. SOFT TARGETS go for the more modern style garage, though the inclusion of zombies in songs seems like it will never go away. (CK)
(Rooster Cow)

MIDNIGHT BOMBERS – "Dirty Business" CD

They're from San Francisco and all dress like that drawing of the Unibomber, which is funny I guess for a minute. They finally have a full length after being around for quite some time. It's big heavy guitar rock. The fast songs are better and the slower ones remind me of HELMET and have almost nu metal tempos at times. The singers voice gets on my nerves and it's too take-your-shirt-off-tattooed-bro-rock for me. I'm half naked drinking a beer and trying but it's still not working. (RO)
(Light Rail Records)

MOBIUS DICK – "Double Myrrh" EP

This is shit, useless. I don't know if it's supposed to be grind, or metal or what but it is so lame. This should have been a demo, if that, maybe just some mp3s or something, it actually sounds like really low bit rate mp3s. The cover and insert consist of some Pushead rip off art with very busty "demon" women, so literally every aspect of this record is a fucking load of shit. (AH)
(self-released)



JÄRNMALM
skördar
och
sår

The Karmalas

KETA MINES
KETAMINES, THE

KING FRIDAY

MONDO RAY – "Hypnotized/Nothing"

The title track sounds like, if you can use your imagination, JOY DIVISION's "Love Will Tear Us Apart" sung by STEPPENWOLF's dirty, punk babies. Side two is a little less ambient, and more twang driven. And I mean twang like the sound of a knicker elastic hitting a buttock. In this circumstance, that is a good thing. I like this. Two decent songs that just cut to the chase without any hint of self-indulgent twaddle. I would never have guessed these guys were German either and again, that's a good thing. (GG)

(Windian)

LOS MONJO / RULETA RUSA – split EP

Punk rockers united to release this kick ass split. LOS MONJO from Mexico kick off their side with a fucking rager of a song with mid tempo beat and some pretty clean guitar tone reminiscent of the stripped down sound of SEDICION. Song two "El Despertar De Los Muertos" is some seriously rocking'80s sounding shit and it fucking rules! This is rock-tinged punk, with leaning toward '80s Spanish punk. But this shit has elements of Mexican street punk with more melody and complexity. If you haven't heard of this that has been kicking around and putting out some rad records—Get this! From San Francisco, RULETA RUSA delivers two infectious songs with a similar sound. Again, the second song on this side "Destruye La Television" blows me away. The guitar hooks here are dangerously catchy while the bass compliments the melody, not by following along, but with some well crafted, non obnoxious noodling, making this song sort of haunting yet menacing at the same time. This is some good song writing. These bands both play in the same vein, but are quite different, making this a solid split. Every song is punk as fuck. Some of the main differences here are guitar tone and vocals… Man, the vocals! Both vocalists sing in Spanish and have a distinct, unique style that is attention grabbing. The lyrics are political but very personal and make one want to set shit on fire. They use their voices, take risks and can sound both pretty and ugly. Enough pontificating—This is a punk record through and through and you should have it. (MB)

(Solo Para Punks)

MOUTHBREATHERS – "Anxiety/The Creeper"

I was really excited about this, it starts off exactly as you'd expect an In The Red release to: A wall of fuzzed-to-perfection, intense, intriguing and attention demanding guitars. All consuming punk rock, which not only shows consideration to melody, but also is heavy and dark enough to really mean business. Everything I want my punk to be, very exciting! Then the vocals kick in, and it's that total boner killer echo, tunneled effect all over this piece. The punk equivalent of the first time millions of women heard David Beckham's speaking voice, disappointed doesn't even come close. Side b is again, crotch wettingly good musically and the echoed vocal, even though I'm not totally convinced, does lend itself better to this track. I love this, even though it sounds a bit like the SEX PISTOLS. I can imagine these bro's might actually blow my mind live. (GG)

(In The Red)

MULTICULT – "Open Fire/The Costume"

Tight, muscular post-punk/indie rock. With the brittle, metallic guitar sheen, circular, repetitive rhythms, and rolling bass, MULTICULT owes an obvious debt to SHELLAC. I also hear more than a trace of BASTRO, as well as JESUS LIZARD and TAR, but without the chaos and abandon that those groups were able to conjure. Both of these songs are a more controlled burn. Packaged with a download code that promises two bonus tracks, which doubles your aural pleasure. (AM)

(Amplified Noise)

NAUGHTY GIRLS – "Bad Habits" EP

SCHOOL JERKS-sounding punk/hardcore from Montreal—I'll be real guys, spend a coupl'a more years listening to CHAIN GANG or something, do something besides Oxycontin (I would suggest heroin) and maybe read a coupl'a books. Not too bad, but I wouldn't kill myself over it or anything. (BB)

(Bad Vibrations)

NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE – "End Up Like Them" Flexi EP

I freakin' ejaculated when I saw this four-track flexi in my review box! Er…OK, a slight exaggeration, but seriously a band does not come around too often that completely reinvigorates my enthusiasm for all things punk. I had just recently picked up the *Panic* EP and haven't been able to take it off the turntable since; and the first EP is absolutely mandatory of course! Sweden's NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE perfectly captures a late '70s KBD punk sound mixed with early hardcore speed and experimentation, sort of like MIDDLE CLASS meets JERRYS KIDS with a touch of melody. And they do this without biting anyone. Trust me, this fucking rules! Yeah, flexis suck, but this is definitely an exception (plus it comes packaged in a solid cover that protects it from bending). Get this and all their EPs now! (BG)

(Signaler Fran Ovan)

NEGATIVE LIFESTYLE – "Panic" EP

This record isn't as good, desperate, or hard-hitting (literally and figuratively) as the *End Up Like Them* flexi 7" reviewed just above, but is still decent, and I like that some thought was given to the different feeling of each record, as to not make one or the other redundant. That said, this one paints the same hopeless, black-and-white picture of a boring existence. To get an idea of how the punchy drums contrast with the clean-ish guitar tone, imagine a D-beat band playing with next to no distortion. Now, combine that with some outsider K-town meets Frontier records-style snot, layered bleak melodies, and frequent tempo changes. The second to last song is led by a dark, dynamic bass line with intermittent guitar and softly spoken vocals, and serves as the shitty almost-ending to the story of bleak, blank day as told by the rest of the songs. (DG)

(Deranged)

NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS – "We Own The Night/100% White Girl"

Two tracks of buzzsaw punk rock. Crammed to the hilt with energy and hooks, taking equal amounts of garage and hardcore whilst stuffing it full of attitude and spit. Girl fronted with an ol' school '80s LA vibe driving the sound. Chunky without being blown out, retro without being dated and catchy without being pop. Damn good stuff. (SD)

(Abscess)

NEMESIS – "Dou-Koku" EP

Ah, fuck yeah, this is what I'm talking about. Like a more hardcore LAST SURVIVORS or PERSEVERE, NEMESIS is dropping some UK '80s worship but with an edge that that's all their own. They have a bit of the late-'80s Japanese hardcore style filtering in, and while it's not as complicated as that stuff, it's got that frenetic pace and huge riffing that makes that style so fucking unbeatable. "Chaotic War" is going to be a new mixtape staple for sure, and "Fight in the World" is an easy runner-up. These four songs are over in a heartbeat and definitely leave me wanting more. (AU)

(Solar Funeral)

NIGHT BIRDS – "Other Side of Darkness" LP

Surf-influenced guitar blazes over straight-ahead punk with a four-on-the-floor garage backbone. The tempo varies very little from song to song but the barely discernible, juvenile vocals command attention. This band would fit well with Southern California Nardcore groups from the early '80s. All the facets of rudimentary punk are present; an earnest or obnoxious verse, catchy or anthemic chorus, herky-jerky bridges and technically limited but blistering guitar solos, but their punk credentials expire there, before delving into anything particularly original. The recording is very clean with nicely separated instruments and the tones of both rhythm and lead guitars forcefully cut through the mix. Considering there is only one guitarist credited, I would definitely like to see if the tone translates live, since it is such a crucial element of their sound. (SL)

(Grave Mistake)

OBN IIIS – "The One and Only" LP

Denton, Texas freak Orville (Redenbacher) leads a rock group now that sounds like an actual rock group, an actual *punk* group to be real with you for a second, this is a lot better than *most things I've heard this month (or year)*. If I listened to anything but ROD STEWART these days I might be inclined to waste some money on this and in fact I still might. This is one of the first records I've reviewed or even listened to that sounds like an actual old punk record, which kind of sounds weird but you might know what I mean—new punk sucks so might as well try and sound like old punk. What do I know, I only listen to HOT BUTTERED "Popcorn." Who cares, I like this quite a bit, might buy it tonight. (BB)

(Tic Tac Totally)

OFF DAYS / UH-OH – split EP

Fuck yeah! UH-OH fucking rules. They play fast-as-shit garage rock that is completely devoid of ego or posturing. Calling them "garage rock" seems like I'm selling them short, somehow. They're more of a straight-up punk band. I feel like they probably find some inspiration in TEENGENERATE, NEW BOMB TURKS, and the RIP OFF'S. Mix that with the scum and hard living of the Milwaukee basement punk scene and you've got yourself an insanely killer band. Honestly, I was afraid to flip the

record over and listen to OFF DAYS, because I thought there was no way they could be as good as UH-OH. I was wrong. OFF DAYS keeps up the rough-around-the-edges garage punk sound and offer up three raging, inspired songs. I would love to see this band in a cramped basement at midnight. They seem like they are drawing their inspirations from a similar pool as UH-OH. Both bands compliment each other well, but each has their own sound going on. Tight as hell. (GH)
(HS!BF)

OILTANKER – "The Shadow Of Greed" LP

A pretty hot, 45 RPM, very loud, ten-song slab of post-HIS HERO IS GONE / FROM ASHES RISE / AWAKENING-ish apocalypto crust from Connecticut. Scruffy around the edges and brute in basic recording, there's a certain level of musicianship to pull off this style. While it's familiar, it never really gets in anyway "generic." This has it's own ripping combination of the trade offs between shredded, high vocals and throaty low vocals, rumbling drums, metallic down tuning, sharp solos and dark, moody riffs. The unpolished nature of the recording—though it's mastered expertly at Enormous Door for maximum volume—kind of gives a unique flair. As most people playing this style lean towards softening the edges and polishing off the grime, this is a throwback to the '90s recordings of Coneticut's long tradition of rough hewn crust bands like DEFORMED CONSCIENCE or REACT. Yet here, the music itself is much more like a refreshing take on 2000-ish southern downtuned crust. Lyrics are bleak with visions of war, cyborgs, victimization, anti-racism and other dire warnings with translations into Spanish. The cover is an astigmatism inducing orgy of black and white pen and ink scribbles of teeth, mechanical birds, pigs heads on spikes, eyeballs, hands grasping dollar bills, leather jackets and burned out buildings, just like it should be. If you love this style, Get this and crank it up! Now! (KS)
(Slainte, no information / No Funeral, no information)

OLD WIVES – "Backed In A Corner" CD

Canadian pop punk from a band that has recorded at Sonic Iguana. So you know it's gonna be sing song-y pop punk with hooks and harmonies. Seven songs on this release in the poppy SCREECHING WEASEL and MR. T EXPERIENCE vein with decent vocals. I enjoyed it. Even though this has been done to death, these guys are good at it and keep it fun, (RL)
(When's Lunch)

OUTDOORSMEN – "Violent Hands" EP

This EP is primitive, rudimentary garage-punk, but it's refreshingly unpretentious, like early JAY REATARD recordings. Both sides of the record are extremely short, containing a strict verse-chorus-repeat format, the A-side sporting a bridge stripped bare to only the most crucial elements. This is effective, because it communicates urgency; the vocalist wants to chant "violent hands," and he wants to chant those words right fucking now. I imagine a gaggle of transient HASIL ADKINS and SONICS starting a band after a chance meeting at a rural filling station somewhere between desolation and revenge in Ohio. (SL)
(Total Punk)

THE PEGS – "Nobody's Listening Anyway" EP

All hail SoCal's the PEGS! Still cranking out snotty surf punk since their inception nearly ten years ago. This is their follow-up release to 2009's *Living at the Surf Motel* and it picks up exactly where they left off, with more of the same great in-you-face rock'n'roll with guitar aplenty and loads of back-up vocals that make this band sound like a great party just waiting to happen. Sorta like how bands like the BODIES or the STITCHES just make you wanna sing along and act like a freakin' spazz!! (ML)
(Rapid Pulse / No Front Teeth)

THE PENETRATORS – "Gotta Have Her/Baby, Dontcha Tell Me"

The Kings Of Basement Rock! Having been given the reissue treatment quite a few times over the years, The Penetrators should be a household name to '70s punk fans by now. Still, in the era of Sing Sing and Last Laugh, repro-reissues of famed singles is a winning proposition, so the flood continues courtesy of Windian. On their debut, The Penetrators perfect the middle ground between '60s garage rock and true-blue '70s punk, with both tunes being just inept enough to fit in with punks. True greatness would emerge with their follow-up single, which I assume will be reissued any moment now. Whatever. You're gonna buy it anyway. I did. (MC)
(Windian)

PETTURIN PALKKA – "Kaikellaista Harmia" EP

Seven tracks of blistering Finnish thrash with scalding male and female vocal trade offs, PETTURIN PALKKA's (translation tools point the name to being something like "Wage Traitor" or "Salary Judas") debut has a clean recording and precise musicianship. Brief intros allow you to catch your breath before the band dives back to a consistent throttling of fast thrash beats in the classic style of ancient Finnish hardcore, but delivered a tempo more akin to a RIISTEYT record set on the highest speed / pitch adjustment. The vocals trade off and occasionally echo each other, in the classic anarcho-crust style of the male vocals—a classic throaty growl punctuated by piercing and commanding female vocals. Lyrics are sung in Finnish, but are translated in the fold out sleeve with unique and sometimes whimsical takes on Anarchism, resistance, Guantanamo Bay, cynicism and more. Solid debut! (KS)
(Tuska & Ahdistus)

PETTYBONE – "From Desperate Times Comes Radical Minds" CD

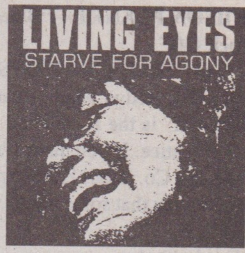
Elaborate packaging here; it's one of those deals where the whole thing looks like a hardcover book—pretty swanky. Now then, this is a solid album from a new-ish all-female UK band that was featured on the *MRR* website a while back. Their sound falls somewhere between metallic crust and peace punk. I'd say they're into stuff like ANTISCHISM, WITCH HUNT and A// POLITICAL, which should let you know that the lyrical content leans just a bit to the left and isn't very subtle. It is effective though; the first track serves as the band's manifesto and is quite inspiring. There's also a particularly punishing song that's sort of a cover of "Armagideon Time," but it just repeats two of the lines over and over; "A lot of people won't get no justice tonight! A lot of people won't get no supper tonight!" Some of the songs do drag a bit, but all in all I'm into this. (KM)
(Damage Done)

PLATES – "Catholic Guilt/Lineage" EP

PLATES is from Buffalo, NY and wanna rock. Their sound falls right in between punk and garage rock. Mid-paced, aggravated, ugly punk, a little like PISSED JEANS. I dug the B-side, "Lineage". (MH)
(Art of the Underground)

PLEXIS – "Vohul To" CD

This trio is from the Czech Republic. Well, the record label is, and they sing (and the printed lyrics) are in some strange script, which I'm guessing is Czech. Musically, they play speedy, snotty early-mid-'80s hardcore, with more than a passing nod to the ANGRY SAMOANS. Or what the ANGRY SAMOANS would sound like with modern production. Fortunately, while we can't speak their language, the music unites us. They've also managed to find sponsorship for their musical instruments, amplification, and drums/cymbals from some good ol' American companies, so globalization is alive and well after all. (RK)
(Papagájův Hlasatel)



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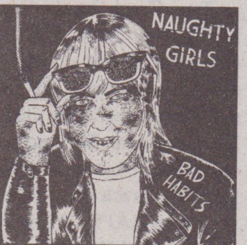

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negative
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EP
END UP LIKE THEM

POISON PLANET – "Bleed For Me/Nazi Punks Fuck Off"

Two DEAD KENNEDYS covers from one of the few straightedge bands I truly enjoy. "Nazi Punks Fuck Off" is the B-side and they definitely do both songs justice. If you think it's kinda cheesy to cover Jello and Co. in 2011, the explanations included will remind you that some issues will always be relevant. (KM)
(Third x Party)

P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S – "Make it Through the Night" LP

I imagine the guys in Portland's P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S as old school punks who likely frequent the dive bar scene to hold them over during times when no decent shows were going on. And at some point while hanging out in one of those joints, with whiskey shots in hand and probably screamed over loud rock music blaring in the background, these veterans of various Portland area bands decided to form a new outfit. The resultant sound is high-energy punk that seems to hover in the vague border region between booze-fueled heavy rock and hardcore. Think HELL NO or even later-era POISON IDEA. The louder this is played and the more inebriated the listener (trust me, I am conducting this experiment as I write), the better this nine-track album sounds. I can only imagine the power in the air when these dudes play a set, as the sound seems more geared towards a live performance than one captured on acetate. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't check this out (but it certainly means you need to see them when they hit your city). (BG)
(Doomtown Sounds / Static Age)

PRUMYSLOVA SMRT / RAPSOD – split EP

Two Czech bands I'm unfamiliar with. PRUMYSLOVA SMRT has a very unique sound. It's fast hardcore but doesn't sound typical. It's as if metal heads started playing fastcore. There isn't a metal influence in the music…there is just a feeling I'm picking up. The tracks are fast enough to border on grindcore but stick to hardcore. RAPSOD do the hardcore thrash thing with quick tight guitar. Good stuff from RAPSOD for their first release. (MH)
(ABC / Hjuboka Orba / Phobia / Totalitarianism Still Continues / Vejmi 666 / Papagájův Hlasatel)

PUFFY AREOLAS – "Gentleman's Grip" EP

Sounds like garage punk from outer space that was weaned on hardcore. I think there is a saxophone in there somewhere that sounds like a Martian. The vocals are kinda sung/growled/spoken through what sounds like a chorus pedal and a distortion pedal. Space jams for the fraternal order of the terminally bored. If you're into other Hozac releases this shouldn't disappoint. (P$)
(Hozac)

REBEL CITY RADIO – "Hello Hypocrite Hypocrite Hello" CD

Damn, fifteen years ago me and the crew woulda been all over this noise from Birmingham. Straight up MURPHYS, ONE MAN ARMY inspired street punk. It's really good and catchy as fuck… Not rating too high on the original-o-meter, but fuck it. I bet this lot are fucking gas live too. B'rum is still a hole, no matter which way you slice it. (TB)
(Killer Shark, no information)

RED PENS – "Next Summer/I Run This"

I always enjoy bands that seem to have a wide variety of different influences that don't really mesh easily, yet are all apparent in the mix. The music is usually slightly off-putting at first listen, but if the band has a bit of talent the oddness creates something interesting. RED PENS has this quality. I can hear elements of garage, post-punk, indie pop, emo, shoegaze, and hardcore, yet I wouldn't say RED PENS would fall into any one of those categories. The vocals are dreamy then occasionally go to a desperate squeal. The music feels suppressed, but it really isn't. Cool stuff. (CK)
(25 Diamonds)

RESTLESS – "Demo 2K11" EP

I first heard this demo a few months ago and thought it was pretty damn good. Well, obviously others felt the same and now, thankfully, it's out on the much better vinyl format. How to describe this? RESTLESS plays fast and cynical hardcore not unlike CIVIC PROGRESS or even GOVERNMENT WARNING, but with a bit of a youth crew sound tossed in for good measure. Maybe "youth crew" is not the right term here, but it sounds like maybe they could be straightedge if they didn't have songs like "Edge is Dead" (sarcasm?) and totally pessimistic lyrics of hating people and being "the outcast of all the outcasts." Six tracks and a cool silkscreen cover make up this release, though a lack of lyrics or info leaves the band somewhat enigmatic. Is this just the first sign of bigger things to come? Check it out. (BG)
(Cricket Cemetery)

RIPPER – "Into Oblivion" LP

Like MOTÖRHEAD? Well this is the record for you. Solo laden with some tough, gravely, deep vocals that are pretty fucking close to Lemmy but veer more into the stoner-y, prog realm. This is in the vein of INEPSY, but far closer to MOTÖRHEAD than they ever got… One of the best bands I have heard in this style. I have to mention that the packing is freakin' nice. The cover dons a rad as fuck skull with horns and the RIPPER lettering is sick. When you open this gatefold up, you know that these dudes have not forgotten HAWKWIND when conjuring up this album and it's lyrics (don't worry, there is no "Silver Machine" in here…). The lyrics are sometimes metaphor laden, landscape painting, and reflective but punk in their sensibilities—they still are still pist and wanna fuck shit up, The illustrations (is this paint or pastels?) inside are very good and look like something Frank Frazetta would draw for the Lord of the Rings trilogy. Noice… (MB)
(Black Water)

ROYAL HEADACHE – LP

ROYAL HEADACHE, another in an endless stream of fantastic new Australian groups, delivers an essentially flawless pop record in long form on their first shot. While their debut single totally impressed, they truly shine here, making the kind of record that folks from a wide array of genres will likely embrace. The performances are top-notch across the board, complete with actual singing that's so proficient and downright awesome that it sounds totally fucking jarring. The production is perfect, fuzzy in all the right places, and propelled by a stabbing guitar sound that recalls the most powerful moments of classic UK DIY punk rock. The soulfulness and excellent songwriting exhibited throughout brings to mind a speedy, punk SQUEEZE, which I hate myself for saying, but fuck it, it's there. Much like stateside heroes HOME BLITZ, ROYAL HEADACHE is capable of conjuring up a monster hook out of chaos and making a whole lot of other current pop bands sound terrible in the process. (MC)
(RIP Society)

RUMSPRINGER / SHANG-A-LANG – split EP

I've heard about RUMSPRINGER for a long time, but have never heard a single song by them until now. Their side features just one song, titled, "123456." It's a mid-tempo pop-punk number with half sung, half screamed vocals. The parts with the yelling back-up vocals work for me, but the rest is so-so. The song doesn't really go anywhere, which is a shame because the lyrics are above average for songs of this genre. On the flip side is fucking SHANG-A-LANG, and their three songs are all great. More upbeat, top-notch pop-punk from these desert dwellers. The strongest song is "40 Ouncers" which sounds like the aural equivalent of driving 90 miles per hour down back roads at midnight with all the windows down on your way to the best party of your life. Eat this shit up quick because I think they're breaking up…at least that is what I heard. (GH)
(Dirt Cult)

SÄNKT – "Kaos I Skallen" flexi EP

Here we have yet another band from the frigid punk wilderness of Umeå, Sweden, a tiny place that has pumped out many a quality release over the last few years. These four songs bear more than a few similarities to Umeå veterans like the REGULATIONS, balancing catchy early-'80s style hardcore with some of the darker, mid-paced stuff Scandinavians seem to be so good at. It's not exceptionally compelling, but if you're down with the sounds that have been coming out of the region over the last few years, chances are this will make a welcome footnote to your collection. (JH)
(Signaler Från Ovan)

SANOV1 – "Delikatesy" CD

Czech Republic punk complete with perfect mohawks. Sounds like UNSEEN and late era CASUALTIES. (AE)
(Papagájův Hlasatel)

SÄRKYNEET – "Ei Enää" LP

Very tuneful Finnish power pop. They have a '60s pop feel with subtle garage influences. If the PRETENDERS were a punk band, they might sound something like this. The band is like an equal mix of BUZZCOCKS and 10,000 MANIACS, if that makes any sense. It's like what you'd imagine finding on Finnish college radio. The guitars are clean and the singer is sweet and smooth, but the riffs are driving and catchy. This is a fun record. (FS)
(Combat Rock Industry)

THE SCARRED – "Live Fast Die Poor" CD

Second month in a row I get a band that sounds just like GREEN DAY. Unfortunately I don't like this release either. The songs are even on the slow side, which makes this worse. This isn't horrible it's just too predictable to keep my attention. (RL)
(Jailhouse)

SCRAP MONSTERS – CD

'77 style punk from Russia singing about cops and rednecks. Cross between BLANKS 77 and LEFTOVER CRACK minus the dub beats. (AE)
(Teenage Waste)

SEIKŌ – "Come Inside" EP

I was quite interested to hear this record because the band has been compared to the '80s ADK records bands. Upon hearing it…eh, not so much. Sure, there's a lot of reverb, but reverb does not dark punk make and this really sounds more like a bedroom rehearsal of a run-of-the-mill hardcore band plus tons of reverb. I guess this thing sold out already so it's not like my opinion is really going to make a ton of difference one way or the other, but: pass. Don't believe the hype? Definitely don't spend the money on eBay, anyhow. (AU)
(Video Disease)

SHIT CREEK – "Scene Cred is Our Name" EP

Oh crap, get ready for a region-rock assault. This is kind of all over the place. Clearly, there are a few different songwriters in this band. The first song kinda sounds like SWING DING AMIGOS. It's fast and out of control, but has that classic pop punk breakdown. The second two songs are this weird mix of Oi! and country, sung by a dude with a really low raspy voice. But it's all finished up with a track that sounds like it was picked right out of TOYS THAT KILL's *Control the Sun* recording session—a scorcher, for sure. But weirdest of all is the album artwork, which squarely takes aim at Scion (negatively of course). And we're talking front cover, back cover, and the B-side label on the record. Dang, these guys hate some cars. See, pop punk dudes do care about more than PBR and chasing raccoons out of their attic. (FS)
(Dirt Cult)

SHOPPERS – "Silver Year" LP

This is gonna sound crazy but her vocals remind me of the girls from HUGGY BEAR but the music is hardcore, so in short this is so fucking good. Sounds like it could have come out on Gravity—like the more fucked-up hardcore UOA or UNWOUND records, it's got this dense, layered, savage appeal. This would have blown my mind in 1993 and it is doing the same now. I am sure it's gonna be seen more in the lineage of shit that is happening now by kids who were not fifteen in 1993 like the human writing this review. It's noisy, sounds like it's on the verge of collapse, everything played to the fullest extent, blown out speakers, drums rolling in and out of control adding to this totality of sound, a wall of form… Honestly it reminds me of *Kandy Korn Rituals* era UNWOUND in the best way, and Meredith's voice is so all consuming and excellent— totally *Weaponry Listens to Love* with less defeat and more sense of what could be. The lyrics are personal and sincere, ambiguous and specific, poetic and charged… Seriously, if you are reading this and have no idea what I am talking about, and like NEON BLUD you will dig the fuck outta this record. This record will not suit you if you only respond to songs wrapped in a heavy layer of ironic removal from the realities of existence and a girl's experience but if you want something else… (LG)
(Drugged Conscience / Feeble Minds)

SINGING DOGS – "Deja Voodoo Blues" 10"

Sometime you just need a good vocalist and a rockin' primitive beat. That is what the two-piece SINGING DOGS deliver. Nothing too fancy, just basic, stripped down rock'n'roll. And I like it—a lot. Catchy tunes, cool vocals and a thumping bass drum. I am glad to see the 10" making a comeback too. (CK)
(Primitive)

SLUGZ – "Suit and Tie" EP

It's another band from Richmond, Virginia and of course they totally rip! Is it something in the water there or what? On their three-track debut, SLUGZ throws down manic and furious garage hardcore that is distorted and chaotic, yet still tight and structured. Imagine the CARBONAS mixed with the ACCUSED, or something of that nature, like distorted rock'n'roll laced with sonic blasts of thrash and a vocal style that must wind up with blood seeping out of the throat. It's loud and ugly, the way hardcore should be. (BG)
(Feel It)

SMÄRTSTILLANDE – "1" flexi EP

Here we have a flexi from a rad new Swedish hardcore band. Definitely more in the vein of DS-13 and E.T.A. than MEANWHILE—short, fast, catchy songs with shouted vocals and a trebly guitar tone. A fantastic, but short, first offering that will leave you salivating for more. I wish I could write something else because this record absolutely smokes, but there isn't much info included and the vocals are in Swedish. Just get it already. (KM)
(Signaler Fran Ovan)

SOMETHING MEN – "Birdy Roof/Mud Brown Mistress"

SOMETHING MEN utilizes the archetype of the modern garage sound. There are jangly guitars playing trudging music with laid-back indie rock style vocals covered in fuzz. It is nice, but also sleepy. Good music to fall asleep to. (CK)
(EZPZ)

THEE SPIVS – "Black and White Memories" CD

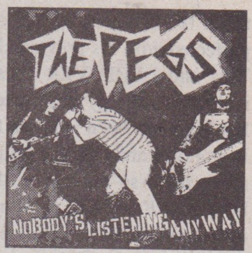
This Hackney power-trio deals in short, sharp shocks of stripped-to-the-essentials punk pop delivered with a bratty Cockney sneer. The overall sound impression is of the singer for ARMITAGE SHANKS singing for the BRIEFS, although in their best moments (and there are many across these fourteen songs), THEE SPIVS also incorporate elements of the BUZZCOCKS, WIRE, and TELEVISION PERSONALITIES. There are even unexpected touches of folk on the album, most notably in the song "Cowboys And Indians." The vocals exude personality, the lyrics are sharp as darts, and the songs are perfect little nuggets, but there's something that's holding me back from going nuts about this record; I think maybe the production lacks a certain energy and immediacy. Their previous album was recorded by Liam Watson—maybe I should go back and listen to that. (AM)
(Damaged Goods)

SPOONBOY – "The Papas" CD

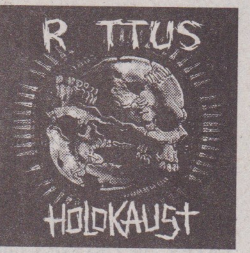
This is a great release. From the world of Plan It X, this is cool indie with awkward lyrics, horns, and just the right amount of amateur charm. Dare I say, a poor man's BELLE AND SEBASTIAN? Also in MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE, this guy knows how to write charming quirky songs. Although I'm not really big on a lot of Plan It X type acoustic/folk/twee punk, this multi label release is a nice surprise. This release also includes acoustic versions of all the songs on the album. (RL)
(Fuck You Is A Seven Letter Word / Discount Horse)

STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS – "From the Dumpster to the Grave" LP

Let the punk police come and take me away, let them strap me into a straightjacket and gag me on the way out the door, but I will still say that this record is fukkn great. I know it's been long out of vogue to like ska punk, and NOFX has been passé for even longer, but my facial hair has been out of vogue for longer than most taste makers have had a turntable, so fuck 'em. I mention NOFX not just because Fat Wreck is responsible for this release, but because STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS have



POISON PLANET
BLEED FOR ME



SCRAP MONSTERS

taken the ska/punk hybrid that frontman Sturgeon perfected with his previous bands CHOKING VICTIM and LEFTOVER CRACK and injected into it the high energy ultra catchy hardcore punk that Fat Mike has been slinging for a couple of decades. It works. Rarely do the hours poured into a record make them so evident as they do on this release, but when *From The Dumpster*… veers off on over instrumentalized tangents it never seems trite—it just seems right. This record is nothing if not sincere, and every musical excursion is obviously a path taken by true fans that have become masters at their craft. Brilliant vocal trade-offs dominate many songs, with Nico's vocals taking a confident lead, and the occasional (but dominant) ska parts are accented by subtly sparse and brilliant keys and horns. If you want cred, then check out this (partial) list of band members and contributors: DEGENERICS, ERGS, NEUROSIS, the COUP, GR'UPS, CONQUEST FOR DEATH, DYSTOPIA, DEADFALL, SOVIETTES…you still need more? Well, then no list would win you over anyway. This is excellent… you might not *like* it, that decision is purely yours. But awesomeness is a fact. (WN)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

STATE VIOLENCE – "Sexual Napalm" EP
The second offering this month from DC's STATE VIOLENCE, but showing a completely different and way noisier attack. Eschewing killer, hook laden USHC for the blown out foreign sound that's sweeping the nation, STATE VIOLENCE has a knack for stripping away all of the subtlety and replacing it with manic and distorted chaos. A total rager—just as good (if not better) than the split EP reviewed just after (or just before) this one. Stoked. (WN)
(Hesitation Wound)

THE STRETCHERS – CD
Thirteen tracks of snotty '77-esque punk. Ok, I know that loads of bands/folks claim to be reinvoking the style/spirit/sound of '77. But, these guys really have it nailed, if by '77, you mean the Brit bands that were around then. These Yankees seem to have been brought up exclusively on a diet of EATER, the DRONES, and the BUZZCOCKS' first *Spiral Scratch* EP. If that sounds like an enticing blend, then I'd snap this one up. (RK)
(self-released)

SUDOR – "Ganas De Vomitar" LP
Scratchy, dirty sounds from Spain are laid out on this ten-track LP. This band bounces between more traditional sounding punk and hardcore finding a nice middle ground in their song writing. It's been a pleasure listening to this band and this LP is well worth checking out. (MS)
(Beat Generation / Solo Para Punks)

SUNDIALS – "Shelter Girl/Drag Me to the Core"
For those of you that are familiar with the long running Art of the Underground Singles Series then you will know what to expect from this record. SUNDIALS have joined the ranks of recent pop-punk bands that sound like they love '90s indie rock but don't really manage to sound like '90s indie rock at all. The A-side is a catchy mid-tempo number while the B-side is a shorter, punkier tune. Both songs sound like could have easily fit on their recent LP. (PA)
(Art of the Underground)

SYSTEMATIC DEATH – "SYSTEMA-8" EP
Yokohama's legendary hardcore export returns with their eighth release. Four tracks that outside of their margins, adhere closer to the formula of the bands original releases than last years more experimental Armageddon Label EP. There's a bit more straightforward, yelping, hyperactive bite and energetic shouted choruses that are the band's trademark over speeding hardcore. Maybe it's even more forceful in its looser, garage-y and drum driven recording than their incredibly solid *Systema 6* comeback LP. What's remarkable is that this basically sounds like any of SYSTEMA's classic material. While a few instrumental flourishes might give the modern band away, it's the (basically unchanged sounding) acidic vocals and intense push and pull along with the shouted choruses that make it classic SYSTEMA. Lyrics are sung in Japanese and translated. They cover man made disasters, the lot of the common man, a lyrically BLACK FLAG's "Slip it in"-ish song about sex, and a song about Japanese spirit. At face value the latter song would seem like a nationalistic paen, but in Post-Tsunami Japan I think is to reflect the indefatigable spirit of Japan often bleeding over into the *gambatte* spirit of their hardcore scene. This is another top-notch release by one of the few bands to reunite and match, or even improve, on their former glory. The ink, pen and stipple master of Japan, Sugi delivers another great record cover. Mandatory! (KS)
(Way Back When / Even Worse)

TERRIBLE FEELINGS – "Tied Up/No Meaning"
Strong release from these Swedes, arriving hot on the heels of another single which received a glowing review in these pages a few months ago. TERRIBLE FEELINGS plays a dark and moody brand of punk/(power?) pop featuring a clean and slightly surf-y guitar tone, strong female vocals and harmonies, and a prominent WIPERS influence. While I'm not sold on the A-side, which is mediocre, though well-executed, the B-side is endlessly creative, driving, and catchy, not unlike MASSHYSTERI or GORILLA ANGREB if they resisted the urge to turn every pop and punk convention you can think of on it's head. If you are a fan of any of the aforementioned, this is one record (or at least one song) that you really don't want to miss. (JH)
(Timme Heie Humme)

TORNADO RIDER – "Jark Matter" CD
A lavish concept album of sorts. TORNADO RIDER has created a lush world—somewhat of a cross between Tolkien and Dr. Seuss—and proceed to sing, play, and visualize it all in this deluxe package (lyrics, liner notes, half a dozen postcards, and a bucketload of imagination). Ten-out-of-ten for effort, inspiration, and dedication. Musically, it definitely veers more into the MARILLION / CAMEL / JETHRO TULL progressive rock territory, albeit with a cello as the lead instrument. Not sure it really has a place in the pages of this here mag, but it certainly wouldn't go amiss in the shelves of your record collection. (RK)
(Silver Sprocket Bicycle Club)

THE TOYOTAS – "Radio Off" EP
This super catchy power pop trio has made one fine 7", which comes free with the *Corporate Rock Knockout* zine from P.Trash. The big radio-friendly hit on this release is ironically entitled "Destroy Your Radio." Three tunes with up-tempo, high-energy rhythm driven tunes really stand out while the slightly slower track, "Monday 8AM," almost lives up to its name. Well, not quite…it still maintains some tasty riffs on the distortion-less guitar. If you pinned me down, I would say it's 50% BUZZCOCKS, 30% the BANANAS, and 20% the GAIN. Whatever that means. Nice record. (HM)
(P.Trash)

TROPIEZO / VIVISICK – split EP
Japan's VIVSICK opens this split with a goofy, bouncy track that left me a bit confused and had me trying to figure it all out, then they rip into their style of thrash with various vocals and sing-a-longs. Puerto Rico's TROPIEZO also play fast, thrashy hardcore that is reminiscent of the early 2000's sound. (MS)
(Discos de Hoy)

TRUE SONS OF THUNDER – LP
From the bowels of Memphis. Noisy and distorted in the best possible of ways. They're like a CONFEDERACY OF SCUM band meets FLIPPER. You know…songs that are raunchy, sleazy, growly vocal-ed treats mixed with feedback laden drug party jams. They even cover my favorite FLIPPER song. Some songs are pretty boring but overall worthwhile. (RO)
(Jeth-Row)

THE TUNAS – "Feather Fish/Lester Bangs is Dead"
Do you think these cats lost sleep coming up with a name?? The TUNAS? Seriously? Ooookkkkay. Didn't know what to expect and was knocked a little sideways with two blazing garage bangers. Sounding like some '60s cast-off psych heads mixed with the punch of the CYNICS or the LYRES. Is the A-side a LOVE cover? Whatevs, it's tasty… Dig in. (TB)
(Primitive)

TURKISH TECHNO – "Past Due" LP
Fast pop punk, in the same vein as SHANG-A-LANG (not surprising then that Chris Dirt Cult put this out). TURKISH TECHNO is bouncy and a little bro-ish, but not on the scale of TOO MANY DAVES. Also, no HOT WATER MUSIC hints on this record, which I was getting tired of hearing. This stuff is just fun, totally chewy, but not groundbreaking or mind expanding. These are party tunes, and from the photo-collage on the insert it seems that they were made by real live party tuners. For fucks sake, they do a MR. T EXPERIENCE cover and it's got a storm trooper on the cover so you already know if you are going to like this. Also, I had to skip the first track of both sides because the record was fucked from warping, which I doubt changes anything about this review, but who knows…those two songs could be setting the world on fire. (LP)
(Muy Autentico / Wolf Dog / Dirt Cult)

TV BUDDHAS – "Hello to Loneliness/Just Another Day in My Head"

This is my first exposure to this band of Israelis (now decamped to Berlin). They've been plugging around Europe for several years by the sound of things. On the evidence of the songs on this EP, I am dying to hear more. Simple, pure, moody pop music with a dark undertone. The most direct comparison I can make is to the WIPERS, but not in the sense of an obvious rip off or anything. This band has found their own sound and their own voice. Their website tells a tale of struggle and hardship, but that all seems to be behind them now. Maybe loneliness will be a thing of the past. Watch for TV BUDDHAS to become the latest hyped band. On the strength of the single, it might be well deserved. (AM)
(Staatsakt)

TWIN GUNS – "Scene of the Crime" CD

This is some '80s inspired alternative rock goth. I am hearing PETER MURPHY, MISSION UK, FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM except maybe without the fog machine on constant. While the goth thing doesn't exactly float my boat, I do enjoy seeing BAUHAUS reunions so this is enjoyable. The more hardcore amongst you might feel differently. The vocals are very dramatic and somewhat over the top. The music is minimal and is buried below those vocals. TWIN GUNS is a two-piece band consisting of Andrea Sicco formerly of OSCURA and ROCKETHOUSE and "Jungle" Jim Chandler who played briefly with the CRAMPS (not even a whole year) and the MAKERS (2001 and on). (CK)
(self-released)

UX VILEHEADS – "Hardcore XI" LP

It took close to "XI" spins to warm this thing up, but it's been getting better with each listen. If the first GOVERNMENT WARNING LP had taken a heap of influence from MINOR THREAT, and included input from a member of REGULATIONS circa their first LP (which this record does possess), it might've sounded like this, with additional boosts in the songwriting department. Most of the music here is speedy, tightly-wound hardcore, with defiant vocals that stop just short of "bratty," and a subtle but rich bass tone that adds its own touch to some of the more mid-paced songs on this LP. The slick recording took some getting used to, but I actually think it works to the record's advantage. Although it doesn't have the flow of a well-defined album, the songs are distinguishable enough from each other to keep my interest, and anticipate what will come next. (DG)
(Adult Crash / Ny Våg)

UŽ JSME DOMA – "Jeskyně-Caves-Jaskinie" LP

This is an incredibly strange experimental punk band from Prague. But it also has a really heavy ska influence on certain songs. It feels like some of the time they are doing a Slavic LESS THAN JAKE, but most of the time they do weird RESIDENTS-style bizarre-rock. Are you totally bored with conventional rock music? This is defiantly music made for people burnt out on the norms. It's like KULTUR SHOCK on lots of drugs and no sleep. Out of control. (FS)
(Papagájův Hlasatel)

VACANT STATE – "Fill The Void" LP

After a couple killer 7"s, this B.C. based band has delivered a crusher of a 12". Heavily influenced by old Boston Hardcore like NEGATIVE FX, and IMPACT UNIT. Saw them live a few months ago and they delivered the goods for sure. This is great, and a real palette cleanser after the bullshit I had to review this month. It's just hardcore, nothing more and nothing more is needed. *Hardcore rules, chumps!!!* (AH)
(Deranged)

VIBRATORS – "Under the Radar" LP

Fuck man, I love the early VIBRATORS…*Pure Mania*? *V2*? Those are my fuckin' jams. So how stoked am I about a new LP??? Not very…those LPs I love came out 34 years ago, so how does a band age over that time??? Not too well… It's clean crispy rock'n'roll with asinine lyrics about booze, and chicks and then a couple of social conscious ones… Ughhhh, this suuuucccckkkkkkkkks. (TB)
(Papagájův Hlasatel)

VOID – "Sessions 1981-83" CD

I seem to recall someone telling me once about a new band that supposedly sounded like VOID. What a dumb idea, I thought, because there will *never* be another band like VOID. Sure, anyone can put together a third-rate FLAG knockoff, but VOID? Don't even try. Ian MacKaye says something to this effect in the liner notes to this CD, describing their music as "always coming from a place that none of us DC kids felt like we had ever been," and their live shows as "becoming increasingly discombobulated and ever more fraught with disaster." While most of us can only imagine what it was like to witness these spazzoids in the flesh, their recordings reveal a band that was really impressive in the studio, managing somehow to be tight and aggressive, yet simultaneously on the verge of falling apart at any moment. Until now, the only available releases have been the VOID/FAITH split LP, the *Condensed Flesh* 7", and the *Flex Your Head* comp tracks, all of which ooze with danger, violence, and unhinged madness. This CD expands upon the recordings that made up those releases by including the entire Inner Ear session of December '81, two songs from a subsequent Inner Ear session in June '82, and a couple of live tracks from two different shows in '83. But the real gem, I think, is their first recording session at Hit and Run from November '81. It's no less compromising, but the songs are newer and looser and the banter between some of the tracks shows a light-hearted side of the band that's surely new to those of us who weren't there for the real thing. Of course, this release won't change your essential opinion of VOID, but it does shed new light on one of the most peculiar and devastating acts the world has ever known, and that in itself is invaluable. (JH)
(Dischord)

WAKE – "Leeches" CD

I've listened to this CD over and over and love it. WAKE is a grindcore band from Calgary, Canada. They meld a modern grindcore sound with a good dose of hardcore. Their sound is big and chaotic. They remind me a lot of a less techie MISERY INDEX or a more grindcore MORSER. Easily one of my favorite releases of the year. (MH)
(Hearing Aids)

THE WAR IS ON – "Welcome To The Rust Belt" CD

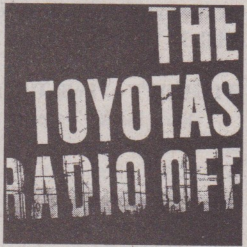
Pittsburgh hardcore outfit definitely influenced by early AGNOSTIC FRONT. Run-of-the-mill stuff here; recycled unimaginative riffs, gang vocals, etc. Song titles like "Taking It Back," "Responsibility," and "One Last Chance," should tell you everything you need to know about this. Zzzzzz… (KM)
(self-released)

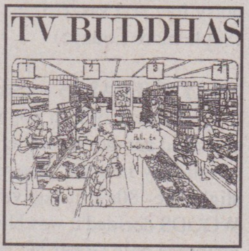
WARSONG – "Ancient Times" LP

These guys are from Spain and play fast melodic punk. For reference, at least one, maybe two of them formerly played in INSOMNIO, a band that I am not familiar with, so I'm not sure if that is a good reference point. This new band isn't really bad, but there's nothing about it that really stands out and makes me go, "Fuck yeah!" To me it sounds like they wrote a song they liked then re-wrote it over and over until they had enough to fill twelve inches worth of vinyl. I need more variety to keep my attention past the first track. (BD)
(Thepression)

SYSTEMA-8
SYSTEMATIC DEATH

¡the war is on!
welcome to the rust belt





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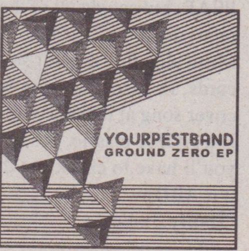

WELCOME HOME WALKER – "Duds!" LP

Glam-y pop with some NICK LOWE touches and a sort of "Portland" element, if you know what I mean. Very happy and on occasion bordering on happy-go-lucky(!), but listenable and decent. I mean, it's no "Up on Cripple Creek" by the BAND, but it's better than TRAGEDY. (BB)
(Taken By Surprise)

WHEELS ON FIRE – "Dead Of Night/Surrender Road"

This is one of them new-fangled '60s-flavored current garage bands. They seem to be going for a tough guy rocker showing his sensitive pop side vibe, but "Dead of Night" is so clean/well-produced, to me it comes off in a pretty staged, "Please put us in your Scion commercial," way. The flip is better, mainly for the Chuck Berry-via-Heartbreakers guitar licks, but the melodramatic tone-deaf singer is still a bit much to swallow. Like, dude, why should we feel so sorry for you? STIV BATORS took years to build a following through his singular brand of tongue-in-cheek charisma and well-timed vitriol, in hindsight you just sound like a whiny bitch. 400 pressed, seems like this is close to sold out everywhere. (GB)
(Milk N' Herpes)

WISHGIFT – "Folk Twain" LP

I don't think I've ever heard a band that I can say is influenced by NOMEANSNO, until now. WISHGIFT is an ugly beast (a good thing). Their dirty, bass driven, prog-y heavy rock made me feel dirty after listening and that's also good thing. This is a one-sided five-track LP. They throw in an organ, vibraphone and even sax on one song. On "Trash Talk" they pummel you, but over the top of it all is noisy free jazz sax. (MH)
(Sophomore Lounge)

XRAY EYEBALLS – "Sundae/Déjà Vu"

Two tracks of lo-fi pop mixed in with some acid drenched garage. A dreamy shoegazing quality slips effortlessly into the groove lending the sound to a slight late-'80s Brit Pop vibe. If the best of IN THE WOODS decided it was bloody time to do a musical jamboree with Goner records you might just end up with this. I wanna hear more. Tough pop for the drug taking youth. I can dig. (SD)
(Hardly Art)

YOUR PEST BAND – "Ground Zero" EP

In case you're not aware, Snuffy Smiles has been putting out top-notch records by (usually) Japanese and (less often) American pop punk and rock'n'roll bands for some time now, probably over ten years I'd guess. Among their latest crop of records comes this new one by YOUR PEST BAND. These dudes played in SF not too long ago with fellow Japanese Snuffy Smiles band, PEAR OF THE WEST. I showed-up late to the show and missed most of PEAR, but caught all of these guy's set. They rocked pretty hard on their take on fast catchy rock'n'roll. Musically, this doesn't stray from their previous records, in case you were wondering. There's also a cover song at the end of each side of the record, one is a NOFX classic, the other a '60s pop staple, but you'll have to check out the record to find out what it is. (BD)
(Snuffy Smiles)

ZOUNDS – "Singles & EPS 1980 – 1984" 5x7" Box Set

ZOUNDS was/is a classic English anarcho-punk band from the Redding area. You knew that already, right? They've reformed a few times since their heyday and recently, they have been playing shows around the US as well as touring with a new album. This box set collects the first five EPs that they released between 1980 and 1984. First off, I just want to say that Broken Rekids did a fantastic job of recreating the art and inserts to all of these old records. It looks exactly like the original releases—very tasteful. I started off with their first EP *Can't Cheat Karma* and it is just as classic and amazing as I remember it, even if CRASS forced them to use a session drummer for that recording session. "Subvert" still holds up as an amazing, timely song after all these years. The lyrics, presentation, and insight on this record show why people still refer to ZOUNDS as a completely relevant anarcho-punk band. *Demystification* comes up next and the title song has sort of a WIPERS / early CURE feel to it. The music is less urgent than the previous efforts, but the impact of the lyrics is just as direct and intelligent. The third single, which contains "Dancing" and "True Love," is quite the departure from the early years, delving into a synthy, very '80s style production. The lyrics are sort of trite and fluffy, but I'd rather listen to ZOUNDS play pop music than KAJAGOOGOO. The EP *More Trouble Every Day* doesn't sway from the '80s pop feel, but the lyrics don't seem so trite. When listening to these later ZOUNDS records, you can really see the kind of influence that CRASS had on their earlier records. This sounds nothing like the ZOUNDS that wrote "War." Let's be clear though: no matter what, I think ZOUNDS was doing something daring, innovative and tuneful while many of their contemporaries were beginning to lose direction. Maybe they were also beginning to lose their direction as well? Rattling down here at the bottom of this box is *La Vache Qui Rit*, which is a little bit of a return to form. The opener, "Biafra," has some remnants of the energy of their first releases and none of the '80s pop production. The record ends with two songs that sound like they were culled from an energetic live show. Overall, this is a great collection and it's put together very well, but I feel like unless you are a die-hard ZOUNDS fan, most punks will stick to the earlier recordings. For those willing to open their minds a little, this box set is well worth your time and money. (GH)
(Broken)

THE ZYGOTEENS – "Sleeping with the Stereo On" EP

Wow, this is really excellent pop punk, not unlike a lot of the stuff you're used to hearing from Sweden, like the PLASTIQUES or the MANIKINS. It's got lots of guitar, it's faster paced, it's catchy as all hell, and it's, well, just plain awesome. The fact that they put out a record with the HUSSY just means they also have good taste. (KK)
(Timme Heie Humme)

V/A – "Embrace The Kill / Hellmouth / In Defence / Opposition Rising" – split EP

Man, this is a long and uninteresting compilation EP. EMBRACE THE KILL starts things off with a metalcore-meets-crossover track that's somewhere in the neighborhood of fourteen hours long. HELLMOUTH picks things up a bit with their brand of metallic hardcore, and thankfully their offering is pretty short. IN DEFENCE is a strange band; they play crossover with political lyrics, like if MUNICIPAL WASTE still gave a shit about anything besides partying. Unfortunately, I can't stand MUNICIPAL WASTE musically, and IN DEFENCE is actually worse. Lastly, we have OPPOSITION RISING punishing my fatigued ears with more metallic hardcore. They're mediocre at best. The only thing that sort of redeems this record is the political nature of all the lyrics, but the music is too glossy and bland for me to suggest purchasing this. (KM)
(Crash Assailant / Profane Existence / Rodent Popsicle)

V/A – "This is Berkeley, Not West Bay" EP

A reissue of this classic 1994 East Bay compilation with BLACK FORK, DEAD AND GONE, AFI, and SCREW 32. 3000 copies were pressed of the original, but it's still hard to come by; it fetches collector scum prices on eBay, probably because of the inclusion of AFI. Fans of that band's current sound are probably surprised to hear the raw hardcore that graces this EP. However, the best track on the EP goes to DEAD AND GONE, one of the first bands I saw when I moved to San Francisco in 1995, quickly becoming a favorite. Now's your chance to pick up a deluxe, re-mastered white vinyl version of this record, complete with a digital download for the first time!
(Zafio)

V/A – "Turist I Tillvaron - A Swedish Punk Compilation" LP

This is a killer looking gatefold LP compilation comprised of bands from all over Sweden. SLÖA KNIVAR starts off the whole thing with a mid-tempo melodic punk-as-fuck song that sounds like a tamer version of HUL, to my ears. STRINDBERG SOM TORTYR has an aggressive pop-punk approach, complete with "whoa-oh" style back-up's. SPOTLICKS, from Stockholm, fucking rules and have a sort of BURNING KITCHEN vibe, but with busier bass playing. ERNST AND THE EDSHOLM REBELS, a.k.a. E.A.T.E.R., is about to celebrate their 30th year as a band. Judging from this song, time has not diminished their enthusiasm or anger one bit. Their song is a fast, hardcore rager. The much-ballyhooed BÄDDAT FÖR TRUBBEL does not disappoint and they manage to mangle some over-used chord progressions into a fun, mid-paced garage rock number. DICK TRACY is above average fast-core with screamy female vocals. Better than coffee! ABJEKT is solid as fuck and take on the stadium crust elements of TRAGEDY or IMPERIAL LEATHER. BLACK FEET offers up a song that is somewhere between LOST SOUNDS and UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND, but is not a clone of either one. SUICIDE SYNDICATE starts off side two with a kind of bar punk song that I believe is about killing kids. It's fun and upbeat, but not too memorable. EPIDEMICS is polished rock'n'roll that sounds like radio rock to me. KRONOFOGDEN reminds me of SEEIN' RED and I mean that as a compliment. Next up is VARSEL who plays three short, fast hardcore songs that recall the best moments of HATED YOUTH and other early '80s hardcore. BEYOND PINK is pissed and fast with great gang vocals. SNUTJÄVEL is fast as fuck, punk as fuck, and great. PRINS CARL is punk'n'roll, similar to that MÖTORHEAD style of rock. GLIDSLEM finishes it off with an all-lady attack that reminds me of a simpler KNUGEN FALLER. They might be my favorite band on here, for whatever that is worth. This record is a good snapshot of punk in Sweden right now. The people who put it together are very excited about their scene and it shows in the presentation of this compilation. Recommended! (GH)
(Sirling)

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Apop: www.apoprecords.com
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Art of the Underground: c/o Alex Kerns, PO Box 250, Buffalo, NY 14205 artoftheunderground.com
Bad Oxygen: www.myspace.com/blackmamboband
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Feel It: PO Box 25045, Richmond, VA 23260
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Florida's Dying: www.floridasdying.com
Fucking Scam: www.fuckingscam.bandcamp.com
Fuck You is a Seven Letter Word: www.sevenletterwordrecords.com
Genjing: genjingrecords.com
Get Young: www.getyoungrecords.com
Glorywhore: www.myspace.com/gloryho
Goodwill: www.goodwillrecords.net
Grave Mistake: www.gravemistakerecords.com
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GTD: the_big_vacation@yahoo.co.jp
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Wolf Dog: www.wolfdogrecords.us
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Wood Shampoo: myspace.com/woodshampoorecords
Wrecked: www.chestymalone.com
Zafio: PO Box 40004, Berkeley, CA 94704

DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Justin Briggs, Robert Collins, Amelia Eakins, Dan Goetz, Brad Lambert, Sam Lefebvre and Langford Poh

1070 SCUM – Very raw D-beat from Georgia with guttural, throaty vocals and little else. I was predisposed to not like this tape because the art is pixelated. When I see artwork that is uninspired to begin with and then actually reproduced with visible pixels, it is usually safe to assume that the band put as little time into writing and recording their music as they did in designing and packaging their physical product. In this case, the recording and songs are indeed of a comparably low resolution. (Samuel) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/1070scum)

APPALACHIAN AUTONOMOUS ZONE – High school punk recorded in a toilet, noisy raw and amateurish. The reverbed vocals and tinny distorted guitars that are ruling the shoelace on the forehead set have apparently (even if accidentally) infiltrated the garages of rural Virgina, and those chaotic sounds are the only things that keep this demo from being crap…except for the apparent affinity for SOCKEYE (who's "Big Chocolate Penis" get's the Appalachian treatment here), which makes me suspect that their assaults on my eardrums (and my good taste) might be more calculated than incidental. And then comes the noise. The noise stuff at the end is tripped out and cool as fukkn' shit. Make a 12" of the noise shit with more of this childish cover art, and you've got my $10. (Robert) (14-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact info)

BIG BOX – Depraved, volatile mid-tempo punk from Iowa City taking cues from the Pacific Northwest school of proto-grunge, as well as Flipper and Big Black. The feedback and song structure evoke The Mono Men, even Nirvana, and the subject matter of their tunes is mildly grotesque, but clever—not the sort of ironic offensiveness that punks too often fall back on. I've never been to Iowa, but I imagine their outlook and demented psyche is somewhat inspired by however it must be to grow up there. The cover of their tape is an appropriate visual accompaniment to the tunes, depicting a balding, bespectacled man wearing lipstick and making a kissy face with his sock puppet. (Samuel) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, Adam Luksetitch, 221 S. 7th Ave, Iowa City, IA 52245, adamluksetitch@gmail.com)

BLACK THUNDERS – HELLCOPTERS, GUNS 'N ROSES, TURBONEGRO…that kind of rock and roll gets a lot of love from the punks. Those punks will dig this Spanish band, but I do not. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, no lyrics, theblackthunder@hotmail)

BLOOD PATROL – Total thrash metal here, but still raw, loose, and basic enough to fit the content of this here rag. Maybe a little *Hell Awaits* and earlier-era SLAYER in some of the verses, riffing with vocals nearing an angrier/punker style of throaty phlegm scream like some of the Swedes, i.e.: Tompa of SKITSYSTEM / AT THE GATES and even, at times—and I might be reaching a bit here—Human Furnace from RINGWORM / HOLY GHOST. Really, there a lot of thrashers with vocals like this, and right now I can't think of a single one. I lose. Overall, pretty good punk-tinged straightforward thrash metal. (Justin) ($9 ppd, 8-song cassette, no lyrics included, www.kink-records.de, ralf@kink-records.de, www.myspace.com/bloodpatrol)

BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS – Appalachian street punks, combine their first two releases on one disc. There's a lot of fukkn' punk on this plastic round, 26 hook laden numbers with melodic leads and gruff vocals. There's just enough redneck in these songs to give it an edge, and the BUSINESS and NINE POUND HAMMER are both made up of working class rockers, so why not tip a hat to both? (Robert) (26-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.brassknuckleboys.org)

BRAZEN HELL – Gnarly churning crust tinged HC/punk from Canada. Sweden via Portland on the guitar leads, but those are just thrown in for good measure and are not the focus of an otherwise refreshingly unique sounding band. Fast as shit when they mean it, and devastatingly heavy when they want to be. Color me stoked. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, brazenhell@gmail.com)

BROOM IGNORANT – Musically, the first two of the three tunes on this live cassette from these Japanese cretins could be BORN AGAINST songs from the first 7". And considering BROOM IGNORANT has appropriated BORN AGAINST's logo, I would be shocked to find out that it's a coincidence. The third track is more of a thrasher in the classic LIP CREAM style of hardcore. Good stuff. (Justin) (3-song cassette, no lyrics included, c/o Hidekazu Tamai, 1177-10 Haraichi, Ageo-shi Saitama-ken, 362-0021, JAPAN, reality0122@yahoo.co.jp, broommmmmm.exblog.jp)

BUFF SHIT – The dirty bass line and extended guitar solo start things off on the right foot, before throwing me for a loop when things switch over to marvelously inept thrashing, interspersed by breakdowns that are good but get to be too frequent. The riffs are solid, and the vocals are recorded unevenly, sound like overdubbed shit (specifically, like someone forced Civ to snort coke), and can barely keep up with the music—which in this case makes them awesome. Unfortunately, the tape slowly loses steam from the initial blast of the first two songs, but I can imagine them being a racket live, and I seriously hope they're pissing off hip scene celebrities everywhere. (Dan) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Eat The Life, 1057 W. Foster Ave #BSMT, Chicago, IL 60640, eatthelifereccords.blogspot.com)

CENOBITES – This is the derivative punk band that exists in every town in the world. Straight ahead three chord shits, with at least one dude in the band that is probably into metal. (Robert) (19-song CD-R, lyrics included, www.reverbnation.com/cenobites)

COLIN & THE CANCER – Straightforward punk rock, slick and fast. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, no contact info)

COPYCATS – Raucous garage punk from Spain, as much influence from '60s rock'n'roll as from modern hip shaking hipster jams. Nasal-y vocals and catchy songs (think early DESCENDENTS given a REIGNING SOUND treatment), just the right amount of melody creeping out of the dirty swinging sounds…and it gets better the more you listen. (Robert) (8-song CD-R, no lyrics, myspace.com/copycatsgarage)

CROSTA – This is a preview of two pre-mixed songs from these Barcelona punks' upcoming *Nus a la Gola* LP. Slower and less raw than their demo tape, their sound has migrated into a darker, more post-punk sound reminiscent of WARSAW and SPECTRES. Still, it has that ULTIMO RESORTE and SILLA ELECTRICA vibe. And is still just as intense. (Amelia) (2-song CD-R, lyrics and English translation included, Spector Garcia, Apdo. 24042 – 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN, cintespodrides@gmail.com)

CROSTA – This reminded me of PARÁLISIS PERMANENTE. Catchy, simple, straightforward, stripped-down punk. Sung in Catalan. Keep it coming, Barcelona. (Amelia) (6-song cassette, lyrics and English translation included, Spector Garcia, Apdo. 24042 – 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN, cintespodrides@gmail.com, crosta@interrupciones.net)

THE DEMOGRAPHIC – Take tight pants NYC rock'n'roll and throw MUDHONEY into the mix. Sprinkle it with occasional syrupy sweet hook and falsettos backing vocals and you've got yerself a rockin' sandwich. (Robert) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, the-dem.com)

A DISCO FOR FERNS – One of the most prolific visitors to the *MRR* demo section, this Texas duo cranks out releases faster than their state cranks out douchebag politicians. Irreverent bass/drum punk with SOCKEYE attitude and about as much "don't give a fuck" as anyone could ask for. This disc features some older tunes as a three piece—it's really hard to keep track of all of the CD-Rs this crew cranks out. (Robert) (20-song CD-R, no lyrics, 8Up records, PO Box 465, Pilot Knob, MO 63663, myspace.com/adiscoforferns)

DOG FIGHT – From the look and layout of this tape, I was expecting another American noise-not-music raw-punk atrocity, and what I got was something a little different. The tape *is* extremely raw, yes, but the tunes are much more USHC rooted than the DISCHARGE/Scandi/Kyushu model permeating most of what is considered "raw punk" these days. Faster thrashers with tasteful, heavy breakdowns and over all of the chaos, really gruff, shouted angry vocals, which sound equally as raw as the music. (Justin) ($3 ppd, 5-song cassette, lyrics included, Ryan Aubry, 214 Shroyer Rd, Dayton, OH 45419)

ETAI KESHIKI – This tape starts off with a crushing discordant sludging that eventually slips into a faster gait, before slipping into a weirder pace for the duration, with occasional stops off at blasting and crawling. The discord remains throughout, and there's a certain balance of metal and emo, similar to '90s bands like TEM EYOS KI or INITIAL STATE. Interesting stuff. (Justin) (4 GBP UK/5 ppd. EU/$6 ppd. world, 7-song cassette, lyrics included, etaikeshiki@hotmail.com)

GEEN NAAM – Really well recorded, epic melodi-core from Malaysia. The vocals are gruff but sung, and the music is mostly faster, poppy hardcore that has enough metallic elements — speedy thrash picking, octave harmonizing, heavy chug-a-rific parts — to still feel pretty heavy. The lyrical subjects range from the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, the fuzz (ya know, like, them coppers), losing faith in Faith, and a *Lord of the Rings* song, though I can't tell if it's actually about *LOTR* or if it's just a metaphor for good versus evil. And two more. (Justin) (6-Song cassette, lyrics included, geennaampunx@gmail.com, www.myspace.com/geennampunx)

GODDAMNN – From Minsk, Belarus comes this jumping little disc full of DIY rock ën' roll punk. The guitar shreds bluesy garage riffs the whole time and the rhythm section lays down solid fist-pumping jams. The lyrics are in English, which I have noticed with bands from Eastern Europe often results in an unintentional comedic gem. This time, I was introduced to the term "blunt gouging" in their last song, which extols the virtues of drinking a mixture of beer, wine, and juice. (Brad) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, goddamnn@riseup.net)

GOD HARVEST – Heavy is the name of the game with these Florida mugs. Chunky, doomed guitar riffs dominate the field here, with flecks of death metal, grind, reg'lar old metalcore, etc., pushing out waves and waves of epic stomping metallic crunch. Ready to stomp religion into oblivion. (Justin) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, godharvest.blogspot.com, godharvest@hotmail.com)

HUNTING PARTY – The churning mid-tempo riffs bring BL'AST to mind, though San Francisco's newest best band are so much more sinister than that comparison implies. This demo is hurtful and scared — manic song construction is treated with brutally personal vocals from a frontman whose live energy somehow manages to transfer to cassette. HUNTING PARTY is an ugly US hardcore outfit, but atonal blistering Finnish hardcore, mysterious and noisy raw punk and the 1990s all stop by for cameos on this brief assault. The "members of" list would make your head spin — best thing I've heard all month. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, huntingpartyhc.blogspot.com)

IRON CROW – A rough sounding tape with two live sets from a pretty burly sounding North Carolina hardcore band. Slow parts struggle to be heard through the weed, and then they lurch into textbook powerviolence blasts. Ultra pissed, the way this shit is supposed to sound, and some serious effort obviously went into song construction to make them stand apart from archetypal fast/slow/start/stop hardcore bands. (Robert) (? song cassette, no lyrics, info@tolivealie.com)

I WANT THE MOON – Gruff midtempo Greek punk. A little metallic in the plodding '90s emotionally tinged hardcore vein. The approach is meandering and atonal, yet my interest was held for the whole disc. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, free from: negativ23@gmail.com)

MANIA – Killer UK influenced punk from Long Beach. Think early GBH before the metal really kicked into high gear with generous contributions from the Los Angeles school of raw ponk. Fukkn' excellent straight ahead raw punk, fists flying and beer all over the damn place. (Robert) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, www.staticoponx.com)

NO POWER – It's difficult to determine whether the guitar feedback is intentionally manipulated to such rigid extremes—whether the bass is being run through an elevator intercom or just a distortion pedal. No Power's influences are even more elusive. Ostensibly, this is raging, Swedish-influenced D-beat, but their segues and intros are seriously bizarre. The harsh noise becomes messy and chaotic enough to resemble DNA or early Einstürzende Neubauten live. The vocals are bellowed slowly, like the last words of a leper exiled to the catacombs, swearing revenge. The b-side of the tape is a crazed opus of esoteric noise. Mostly, the band's name is repeatedly screamed, then double-tracked, along with some thumping drums and relentless guitar feedback. When everything is then drenched with reverb, it sounds like fucking King Tubby got a hold of the track. Check out the rest of the bands released by Statue Story Tapes when you order it. (Samuel) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, www.nopower.blogspot.com, $5 ppd, 2537-F Woodbrook Ln, Monroe, NC, 28110)

OUTLOOK – Powerhouse. The stuff on the B-side will also be on OUTLOOK's LP that is in the works, and now I'm stoked for that to come out, too. There isn't much of anything that I don't like on this tape. They take just enough influence from the different realms of hardcore and in the right mix to create their own distinct sound. The band plays mostly mid-to-faster songs in the youth-crew strain, with intelligent political lyrics. It's hard to talk about OUTLOOK without mentioning the vocals. Adriana, the singer, has one of the coolest and more recognizable voices in hardcore; it's a deep and raspy shout that makes her sound like The Fucking Boss. It's not what you're expecting, and that is kind of OUTLOOK's forte. The music has layers to appreciate: in the same song, I can be finger-pointing and shouting along with the Edge Choir before the guitars get a little noisy and chaotic, but then transition into a straightforward breakdown that taps into the young dance floor ninja in me and let's me know it's time to mosh. I'll be seeing these kids in the pit when they come through with the LP. (Brad) (6-song tape, lyrics included, outlookolympia@gmail.com, www.oursound.net/outlook)

PEROXIDE – Portland raw punk. Lo-fi, noisy, and recorded by Maus, so it automatically sounds sick. Ripping guitar, especially on the first track. Reminiscent of BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS and ANTI-CIMEX. Envision vegans making leather-charged punk. Ex- ROTTENFUX, RUKKUS, and BLOODSPLATTER. (Amelia) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, limited to 200, Portland, OR, peroxidepdx@gmail.com)

PESTE – Fast, raw hardcore punk from Spain. Reverbed vocals. Would be perfect on a line up with MATA MATA or GENERACION SUICIDA. (Amelia) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, Spector Garcia, Apdo. 24042 – 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN, cintespodrides@gmail.com)

POX AMERICANA – So much about this demo reminds me of mid-period BORN AGAINST—from the vocals, to the atypical rhythms, to the marriage of serious political songs with satire/sarcasm/humor. The bass leads the charge here and helps reinforce some pretty serious melodies. (Justin) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, 37 Grail St. #3, Asheville, NC 28801, poxamericanapunk@gmail.com)

RADIO REDS – Anthemic '90s indie punk worship — think SUPERCHUNK, JAWBREAKER and the like. Well written songs with sweet and earnest vocals that completes the vision. The recording is a little dirty, and it suits the music well…a little crunch is a good thing. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, michaelK336@gmail.com)

THE SENSITIVE SIDE – Instantly infectious keyboard drenched retard/garage punk. Steeped heavily in '60s hooks but with plenty of modern energy and distorted whining vocals. Songs are crafted deliberately to achieve maximum awesomeness, and they succeed. Doesn't sound like, but will easily appeal to fans of EPOXIES, SPITS, and so on. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, no lyrics, $1ppd % 510 E. 3rd Street #116, Pomona, CA 91766, www.thesensitiveside.com)

SERIOUS PROBLEMS – Total '90s-style Epi-Fat-core, of the earnest and heartsick "whoh-oa" variety. DOWN BY LAW comes to mind at times, as does a greasier PROPAGANDHI, though without the fortified politics. If you're one of those people that still digs the Punk-O-Rama CDs (secretly or otherwise), chances are you'll like this. (Dan) (5-song CDR, lyrics included, reverbnation/seriousproblems)

SKOOGIE BOYS – Melodic guitar driven punk, over produced and slick. Think later SOCIAL DISTORTION with pretty boy vocals. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, www.skoogie.com)

SOBER DAZE – A live DVD-R filmed Austin, Texas. Spikey haired melodic punk with dual vocals and catchy choruses. (Robert) (? song DVD-R, no lyrics, "find us on facebook")

SWAMP WITCH – From the urban murk of Oakland and the wasteland of Fresno comes the fantastic and disturbing doom EP, *Gnosis*. With the prevalence of pretty, funereal, doomish tendencies in heavy music these days, it's nice to come across a recording that slakes my thirst for dark, ugly, and brutal. Literally, it's a bit scary. It reminds me of the jarring atmospheric qualities of Black

Twilight Circle bands but dirtier, with the noisy, overwhelming presence of ANCESTORTOOTH and other Woodsmoke outfits. The music is slow and punishing without any groovy noodling or ethereal qualities. The band's master control switch is stuck somewhere between crush and destroy. Lyrics are delivered in guttural screams and growling yells that sound impossible, but word on the street is that the vocals are not run through any processors. What you hear is just a dude with a microphone and whatever is going on in his head. Then for added weirdness, the second side of the tape has a chopped-and-screwed doom version of the first side, remixed by DJ Dreemz. For those not familiar, "chopped and screwed" is a hip-hop DJ process of slowing the timing of a song, then skipping beats and scratching to make a rough and chopped-up version. This has got to be a first for a doom band, and it somehow works. Ruling. (Brad) (4-song tape, no lyrics, serpentobscure@rocketmail.com)

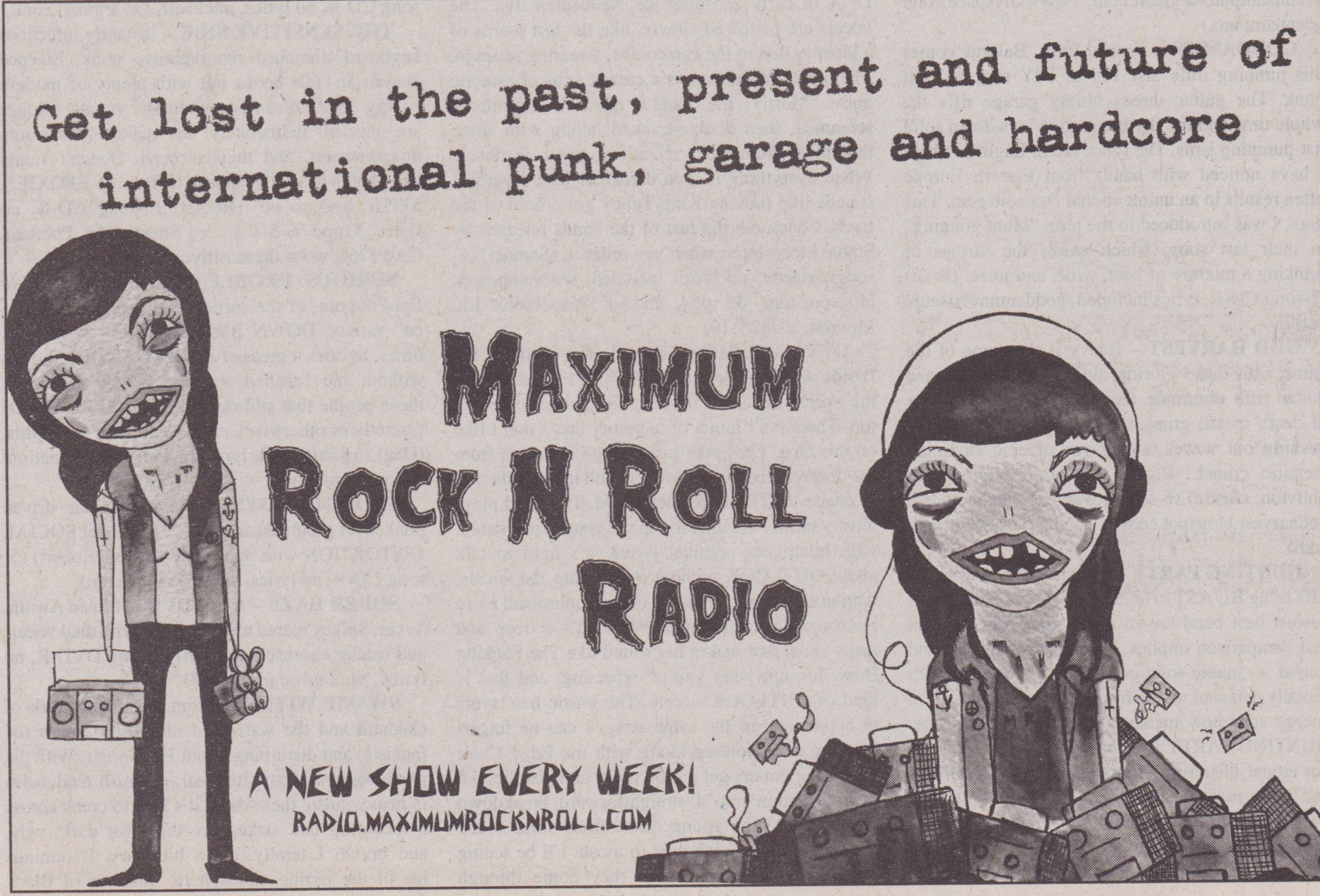
VACCUUM – This is the second demo from this amazing San Francisco hardcore band. This tape is a bit different from their previously released material, with even more of a noise aspect. The vocals are run through something that makes them sound atonal, muddy, and echoing. The music is still fast and intense hardcore, but without the blown-out and crushing tone I heard on their EP. It's like they tweaked their sound in the opposite direction, dialing down the distortion and achieving a lo-fi quality that adds a note of aggressive disquiet to the frenetic nature of the guitars. The music creates a feeling of nervousness bordering on desperation, and I'm not getting any help from the liner notes. It's nothing but black-and-white graphic noise. I really like this, but it makes me ill at ease, like I don't actually get it. (Brad) ($4 US/$5 world ppd, 91 Bennington St, San Francisco, CA 94110)

VICIOUS BRICKS – It seems like when the folks in southern Florida put their minds to a task, they do a pretty good job. Especially when that task involves making good hardcore. This shit is mean and ugly, short and fast, and the songs will stick with you long after the tape is finished. Really angry and noisy music, I can only imagine that the crowd loses their fukkn' minds when they hit those breakdowns. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, noreprieverecords.com)

VULVALARD – How embarrassing. I live in the same town as this band and hadn't checked them out. Something about the name—the combination of "vulva" and "lard"—just seems like something I don't want to know about. The music is much more palatable. The band plays crusty hardcore punk with more weight given to crust. It's pretty raw and angry, with lots of screams and some garagey guitar licks. Kind of in the vein of HIS HERO IS GONE's less melodic stuff, but a bit more galloping. (Brad) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, $4 ppd US, $6 Europe, Matt McDonald, 3762 Marion Ave, Oakland, CA 94619, stupdbqy@sbcglobal.net)

WEAK LINK – A solid demo tape from another fine, relentless Canadian hardcore band. Musically, they borrow well from Negative Approach on their verses and channel Agnostic Front on the breakdowns that abound throughout most of the nine tracks. The NYHC influence is tempered with an obvious fondness for '80s hardcore in general and this ought to appeal to every punk who appreciates inspired, savage, fast and furious punk from any decade and any town. The lyrics deal strictly with disillusionment, self-destruction, and futility. Since the lyrics are included, I can definitely say that there is not a single positive line on the entire tape. Such a cohesive vision is a great asset for a band. Once a band has a calculated, premeditated musical and lyrical identity, they can hone it and make it compelling. We can look forward to WEAK LINK becoming more and more compelling. (Samuel) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, $5, Michael Phillips, 125 Merrymeeting Rd, St. John's, NL, A1E 2W3, Canada)

WRONGDOER – If I dubbed this demo "prog/psych/hardcore brilliance" would you be intrigued? If you were a smart person, with good taste, then yes you would. If hardcore was made for movie soundtracks, then this band would be millionaires — epic and well thought out attacks that rarely hit the two-minute mark, and inject genuine thought and originality into grinding metallic fastcore. Loads of quiet interludes and epic buildups, but WRONGDOER are far from pretentious. Intriguing demo — I want to hear more. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, wrongdoerwrongdoer@gmail.com)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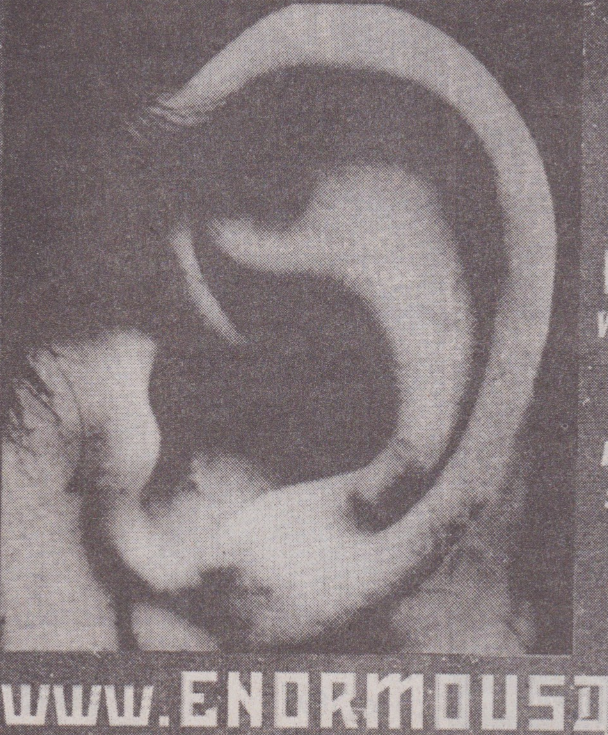

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Canadian zines are filling me with good feelings these days, namely, zines hailing from this address on Rue Sainte Marie. Not a day after I returned home to a package full of *Broke Ass* one, two, and three I was greeted to a plastic bag carrying this little fucker dangling from Julia Booz's fence (where she left it for me to pick up while she was at work) both bearing the same sender address. It's a stark pile of pulp, full of high contrast photos, scribbles, and textures with type-written text pasted over. This issue seems to largely muse on the gratifying trials of punk migration. It features an endearing column by (the aforementioned) *Broke Ass'* own Steve Dejected that mentions a dubious pair of "subhumans jammies". Is this real? Please make it so and then send me some. The yam-eating author muses on what drives them to keep on keeping on with this print format. It's graceful and poignant with a dollop of inspiring cheese. I like this shit. (EC)
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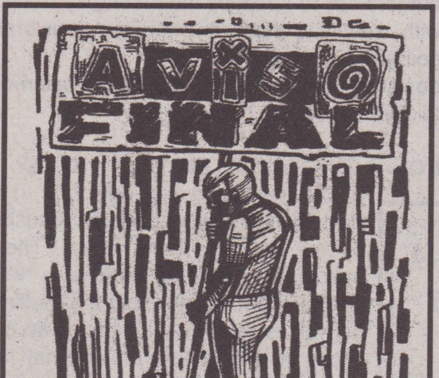
ACCEPT THE DARKNESS #7 RATCHARGE #25 split / $3 ppd, $4 world
8.5 x 11 – copied – 18 pgs
More of the cut-n-paste glory we have come to expect from both of these zines. Ratcharge contains a very relevant and topical interview with the founder of La Vida Es Un Mus and an engaging interview with Tyvek, both reprinted from the French zine, *Freak Out!*. The highlight however, is an interview with the man behind Always Never Fun Records, who is responsible for *Welcome to the Arse-End of the World* compilation of contemporary punk bands from New Zealand, a country with no pressing plant, outrageous postage and, generally speaking, an inferiority complex. Thankfully, this comp is a firm assertion of New Zealand punk's relevance, and this interview sheds some light on the inspiration and story behind it. Also reprinted is an interview with Sun Ra from the '70s and a list of recommended music from Alex Ratcharge. He steers us proper with a whole gamut of international hardcore and punk from the last few decades.

Accept The Darkness sports some excellent reviews. It seems when the author hears a record, he is overwhelmed by a flood of vivid imagery and stream of adjectives emanates from the crevices of his psyche. Luckily, he has a tape recorder to capture the psychobabble while he paints some crazy shit on a piece of cardboard then uses his audio/visual mess as a guide to write a visceral review for his zine that looks as frenetic and energized as his writing is. The layout is stark and positively disastrous. It teeters on the brink of readability and teasingly threatens to leap, forcing readers to await the next issue and find out whether it has taken the plunge. (SL)
www.ratcharge.blogspot.com /
www.acceptthedarkness.blogspot.com
eggmangel@gmail.com



ANTIPATIA #20, #21, #22, #23 / free downloadable PDF
14 x 11 – copied – 2 pgs – Spanish
I realize that right now I am the only person that can review Spanish language, and I am working on getting multi or bi-lingual punks in here (if you are in the Bay Area, let me know!), but I will rue the day that I can no longer review this *kick–fucking-ass zine*! Issue #20 Schooled me on the history of Chilean metal (including cross over) and a slew of information about radio shows, zines, bands and more! Issue #21 features one in depth article and living history about Biblioteca Anarquista Archivo Historico Social Alberto Ghiraldo, the famed Anarchist library and archive in Argentina which highlights what a true library is—a place to exchange and develop ideas, provide free information to all, a beacon of international cooperation and a center for fucking shit up. The main weapon is knowledge—from the streets from books from many places, but all applied. Fucking cool. Issue #22 is all music, giving you the low down on the happenings, shows and killer new punk going through Spain. Each band and release mentioned has concise descriptions and information about how to get your paws on it all. Take advantage! And last we have #23 comprised in full of an interview with Crust tinged scandi styled hardcore Descrenca Absoluta from Brazil talking about politics, the situation in Brazil and the state of punk. As always, this is a well-written and endlessly interesting zine. If you haven't already checked this zine out, do it now Whether or not you read Spanish, this is a great incentive to start. This is easily one of the best zines in existence… (MB)
www.antipatia.wordpress.com

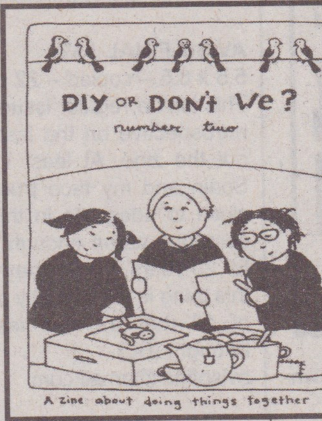
AVISO FINAL / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs
This isn't a regular issue of *Aviso Final* but a retrospective on the last 20 years of putting out the zine. At least I think it is. It's from Spain and my taco truck slang is not even close to adequate in this case. It's rad that someone cares enough to put out a fanzine for 20 years, I hope they do 20 more. Most of this thing is taken up by pictures of the covers of all the previous issues. Cool to look through. (BL)
avisofinal@gmail.com

AVISO FINAL #28 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 10 pgs
This is April's issue of a long-running fanzine out of Spain, which is unfortunately in more difficult Spanish than I can reliably decipher. It looks pretty quality, with band interviews and reviews of records and zines. The bands interviewed are Futuro and ARD (After Radioactive Destruction). The layout is clean and the art and pictures show up well. It's a pretty well-done zine and I really like the cover drawing of a punk rock Mona Lisa. (BL)
avisofinal@gmail.com

ZINES

CORPORATE ROCK KNOCKOUT #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 80 pgs
Close to half of this issue covers past and present Canadian bands, with a scene report covering a large number of Canadian cities, interspersed by band interviews. The White Wires/Mean Jeans European tour diary is in fact scanned pages of their (presumably shared) tour diary, and the laughs make the strained eyes worth it. There are also a ton of interviews, including but not limited to those with the Toyotas, Kidnappers, Personal and the Pizzas, Ty Segall, Burger Records, Modern Pets, etc., stretching all the way to the back cover. There's also a Goner Fest recap and record reviews, though the latter are separated into the categories of LP, metal, and 7" reviews for whatever reason. Also included is a bonus 7" from the Toyotas. (DG)
c/o Bernd Fischer / Am Hemberg 40 / 49716
Meppen / Germany
crko-thh.blogspot.com

CRUST DOG / $1
5 x 8 – copied – 13 pgs
Comics aren't really my bag, but this one rules. It depicts the valid reasons why oogles with starving dogs piss us punks with jobs off. Although the oogle in this aesthetically looks more like a raw punk than a train hopping spanger, it accurately depicts all those rants that you and your friends have gone on about being asked for your hard money by some kid with an iPhone and an emaciated pup at his side. This zine is for anyone who is annoyed by spangers and wants to rescue their poor dogs. Buy it, xerox it, and distribute it in Tompkins Square Park, the next Amebix reunion, if there is ever a Pointless Fest again, or wherever your traveler brothers and sisters congregate during punk summer camper season and beyond. The message is very clear in these pages and is spot on! The drawing style is punk in a way that mixes Avi Spivak with Alex Ratcharge. Up the house punx! (AE)
Anthony Sorge /
266 Kasson Road / Bethlehem, CT 06751
anthonysorge@hotmail.com /
anthonysorge.tumblr.com


DIY or Don't We?
number two
A zine about doing things together

DIY OR DON'T WE? #2 / $3 USA, $4 Canada and Mexico
5.5 x 7.5 – copied – 40 pgs
The other day at work one of my co-workers made a comment regarding the sticker on the Bike Kitchen's register. The phrase "D.I.T." was of some confusion to them. I was all, "duh, it stands for Do It Together. Didn't y'all read the liner notes for the Bread & Circuts LP?" I guess it always stuck in my mind because it always meant a lot to me. *DIY or Don't We* is a collection of pieces regarding the ethics of not only doing it yourself but also doing it together. It's made up of pieces written by groups and individuals about the process of creating. Highlights include: a piece about the collective process written by NYC women's art collective, For the Birds, and a cool jam recipe. It's topped off with a sweet pink cover. (EC)
PO Box 743/ Olympia, WA 98507/
diy.or.dont.we@gmail.com

DOSIS MORTAL #1 / $2.50 world,
Free locally
6 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs – Spanish
Cool new zine from Barcelona that on its very first page calls for all punks to do something! "Only love, learning, sensless creation and destruction of all forms of thought can save us from this hell!" Shit, I am in! What follows are one page descriptions of the bands Saw Throat (and their Inde$troy album), OK?, White Boss, Las Otras, Hipercarga, Les Aus, Deny It, Crass and a short two page article about an Icelandic made for TV documentary that came out sometime in 1981 or 1982 about punk and new wave in Iceland. Interesting! This is a fun, easy to read, earnest and cool little zine, giving punks a head up to music that follow the tenets of the authors call to keep life interesting by filling it with creativity, chaos and to keep your brain going! (MB)
dosismortal.interrupciones.net / dosismortal@interupciones.net

EQUALIZING X DISTORT Vol. 11, #3 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 22 pgs
Rad fanzine out of Toronto focusing on the hardcore punk scene. There are nice and long interviews with Snakepit and Martha and the Muffins, as well as reviews. The zine is an offshoot of radio show project that the same kids do. They put some time and effort into making the zine look great so I imagine the radio show is pretty good as well. When I read fanzines I always like to read the reviews of bands that I like to see if the people who put the rag together have decent taste. I can tell by the Coke Bust, Resist Control, Fuck On the Beach, Iarm, and Kriegshog reviews that I could probably hang out with these dudes. (BL)
equalizingXdistort.ciut.fm

EQUALIZING X DISTORT Vol. 11, #4 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 20 pgs
Everyone loves a Gauze reference, right? *Equalizing X Distort* is very Toronto and hardcore centric, but makes both scenes relevant to all punks no matter what subgenre of punk you favor. Toronto, it seems to me, is the North American capital for hardcore like NYC is for raw punk right now. I wish I had received this last month, but by the time this review goes into print, it'll be too late to put in a plug for Not Dead Yet Fest that happened in Toronto this month. Hope you had fun getting off the message boards and seeing The Men, Veins, Urban Blight, and Hoax. Speaking of Urban Blight, that is the band of the month in this issue of *Equalizing X Distort.* (The name is a reference to unappealing parts in an urban landscape and is a technical term from Urban Studies.) The interview is from October 2010, right after the boys got back from their European tour. The highlight of the interview for me was the European tour stories like sleeping in a record store, squats, getting lost, and playing to hundreds of French punks who brought four dogs each to this fest in Southern France. The lyrics are relevant to what their singer endures as an aware person living in another fucked up city. I got the impression that it has been difficult for Urban Blight to practice due to crazy commutes for their members, but they still made the effort. If bands are interested, you can submit your recorded material for the *E x D* radio show at the below address or request a copy of *E x D* in print. There are also book, record, and demo reviews in the back. The reviews range from the Lama re-issue to Total War's demo. (AE)
21 Foundry Avenue, Unit 5 / Toronto, ON /
M6H 4K7 Canada
equalizingXdistort@ciut.fm /
exqualizingxdistort.blogspot.com

FIFTH ESTATE #385 / $4
8 x 10.25 – printed – 38 pgs.
You know a zine is good when you spend ten minutes just reading the letters page since everything is thoughtfully argued and issues from previous issues are debated intelligently. I mean, seriously, I despise most "anarchist" zines because they are frequently full of pretentious drivel or just plainly predictable and boring. But this is not the case for *Fifth Estate*! Although obviously covering similar political and environmental issues as many other publications of the same nature, *Fifth Estate* has a slightly less didactic approach, a sensible layout, and writing that's worth reading. Among the features in this issue are a debate on anarchism and copyright concerns, a brief history on anarchist fiction (and some pages exclusively dedicated to short anarchist fiction), coverage on Gaza youth-centered riots, and the recent uprisings in Greece. (BG)
PO Box 201016 / Ferndale, MI 48220 /
www.fifthestate.org

THE FORGE #3 / ?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 18 pgs
This little guy comes to us straight outta Birmingham Alabama. The premise is to facilitate a conversation and create awareness in the Birmingham area about DIY punk that is non-christian based (because apparently there is a huge Christian punk scene in Birmingham). There is an interview with Fight Amp from New Jersey, and Turnover from

Virginia. There is also and interview with Will Killingsworth (Orchid, Vaccine, Punk Planet, etc.) who lived in Birmingham for several years. A comic strip, drawings, and short stories are also interspersed throughout. (DJ)

theforgezine@gmail.com /
i_hate_you_too@hotmail.com

MAP OF FOG #3 / $3

8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs

If the great Studs Terkel were with us today, and if he took an interest in interviewing various people in the San Francisco area with diverse and fascinating backgrounds, *Map of Fog* would be something he might have made. More historical and sociological than punk rock, this delightful zine asks intelligent and provoking questions to those being interviewed, with a focus on what brought them from such disparate backgrounds to San Francisco. The ethos of *Map of Fog* is still "punk," in a sense, because the individuals featured either have a background with the punk world or have had experiences that would be interesting to most literate punks, such as Jose, who barely escaped the violence in El Salvador in the early '80s then made his way up to the United States and entered illegally with the assistance of a coyote. As if the compelling interviews weren't enough to merit high regard, there are also a few pages dedicated to giving an informative and historical look at fraternal organizations that still exist in one San Francisco district. For those who enjoy reading about history and culture to balance off the constant bombardment of interviews and reviews that comprise almost every other zine—especially people familiar with San Francisco—this should unquestionably be in your possession! (BG)

Marcos Soriano / PO Box 27252 / San Francisco, CA 94127

THE PAPAS / $?

8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 30 pgs

So, this zine doesn't really stand by itself. Essentially, it's the extended liner notes to the album *The Papas* by Spoonboy. For those of you still reading, contained within is a piece explaining the genesis of the record, album credits, lyrics and chords to all of the songs, and some essays on gender, sexism and rape. Coming at this zine from the perspective of someone who remembers not liking this album that much and not really giving much of a chance, I was charmed by how engaging and smart Ole Spoons is with his prose. Seriously, after reading the intro, I actually read all of the lyrics to the songs. No crack that flooded my brain with light (fuck you Stoppard), but still noticeably more appreciable. The real shining gems in this zine, however, are the essays in the back half. They all complement and seek to build a foundation for the artistic works in the first half of the zine. As a whole, the zine effectively supports the music, and while I still don't love the record, I am listening to it right now (not right NOW now, but right now when I'm writing this...although it's possible that I am listening to *The Papas* right now, like NOW now, although it is unlikely), and I like it a lot more than I did. (LP)

Spoonboy / 1319 Decatur St NW / Washington, DC 20011
www. iloveyouthisisarobbery.com

RAZORCAKE #64 / $4

8 x 10.5 – printed – 112 pgs

I freakin' love *Razorcake* and read it from cover to cover whenever I come across a new one. Much like how *Flipside* used to do, this magazine offers a slight contrast to *MRR* in content and style, but still exists in the same cultural realm of DIY punk to be of interest and relevance to most *MRR* readers. My favorite feature in both magazines is the columns section, and *Razorcake* always promises to be a good read with their roster of various contributors. I dig how the columns feature illustrations and how comics are interspersed between them as well. Some of the extensive interviews this time around are ADD/C, Madison Bloodbath, acoustic punks The Ship Thieves, and New Zealand punk musician and label runner Andrew Tolley. And of course you get a boatload of reviews and everything else you love about good music zines. You're missing out if you're not reading *Razorcake*. (BG)

PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042 /
www.razorcake.org

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SMILE, HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE! #14 / $4 + shipping

5.75 x 8.75 – copied – 68 pgs

Ah, Charm City. The largest metropolis in the state I called home for twenty-seven years. An unusual city; one where you can go from witnessing young boys beating the shit out of each other near a truck engulfed in flames to a peaceful neighborhood full of eccentric yuppies in a matter of a couple of hurriedly walked miles. This excellent long-running zine exclusively features works about life in Baltimore. Most of the pieces are non-fiction with some fantastical elements, but there are also a couple of fictional stories and plethora of poems interspersed. The standout work from this issue comes from a guy named Earl Crown who relates a ridiculously entertaining tale featuring the following things: weed, a piranha, knives, Dalmatians, annoying neighbors, and prostitutes. (Sounds like a party at my house!) Other memorable selections include a forty-something woman recounting her journey into the world of burlesque and a man's feelings about witnessing his first murder after relocating to Baltimore. Overall, the writing is as dry and humorous as one would expect from inhabitants of the decaying city. I don't mean to imply that you have to be from or have spent time in Baltimore to truly relate to the pieces, because anyone could pick up this zine and enjoy it, but knowledge of the city would certainly make the reading experience even better. (KM)

www.eightstonepress.com

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #64 / trade or stamps or IRC

8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs

I am certainly not here to tell you what is or isn't punk, although I file "Christian Punks" in the same category as the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus. This guy *is* here to tell you what is and isn't Christian, and he would say those things aren't...along with Capitalism and Casual Sex. Seems like he could use a pen pal, and if you love arguing he would certainly engage you in a thing or two about theology and Anarchism...and punk. The title certainly is true, and you could do a lot worse. This is a simply a zine about what this guy is into, including tedious coverage of some bands called A Group of Individuals, AOS3, and Schwarzenegger, a million book reviews on fucking Jesus, Faith, and the Jewish Connection, plus twelve pages (!) in small type, of boring reviews of every homely record store in Ohio and beyond. The whole thing has a vibe of loneliness and longing, and, he has been writing it for a really long time. Someone out there cares, just not me. (JB)

516 Third St NE / Massillon, OH 44646

THE STOWAWAYS #1 / $1

8.5 x 11 – copied – 9 pgs

First issue of a zine that will hopefully get better with future issues. The show reviews are lengthy, but the writing style is bland and fails to capture the author's excitement. His below-average tour diary manages to make the experience sound more mundane than it probably was, and the interview with a member of The Henry Clay People, which uses zero line breaks and is therefore irritating to read. The record reviews are surprisingly good and capture the feeling of each release, but it's too little too late. The layout is basically too-dark pictures and large blocks of text thrown onto a black background at a copy shop, and while I'm still glad this wasn't done on a computer, it leaves a lot to be desired. (DG)

c/o Christopher Gordon / 5082 Wendover Rd. / Yorba Linda, CA 92886
romancandlesmusic@gmail.com

TAKING THE LANE "SEXY ON THE INSIDE" #4 / $3
6.5 x 4.25 – printed – 24 pgs

I like a colorful oddly-sized zine as much as the next dude so this got me going when I opened up the envelope. This issue of *Taking the Lane* revolves around the Portland based bike dance troupe the Sprockettes. The author very intelligently delves into the inner workings of the group process as well as the exterior gaze that is inherent not only in performance but specifically women's performance. Issues of reconciling the author's fuddy duddy moralistic feminisms with the dance troupe's patented let-your-freak-flag-fly attitude is somewhat worked out with in these pages. I sense that there is a driving morale that, as women, we have a lot to learn from one another and allowing and working for those times and spaces is imperative. It's a wonderful sentiment. Unfortunately, it's negated by the author's recent "alleged" actions of attempting to extort $300 from a fellow punk lady in Kansas because she cancelled a tour that the author of *Taking The Lane* was involved with, which just happened to also include carting around said perpetrator of abuse. Not cool. You can check out this for more info:
http://crabigailadams.wordpress.com/2011/09/29/extortion-is-so-punk-rock/ (EC)
Elly Blue / elly@takingthelane.com / takingthelane.com

TEENAGE WASTE #1 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 30 pgs – Russian

This zine is jam packed with goodness and makes me want to learn Russian. Interviews with bands include: Pullout, Citramons, Pincher, Infa Riot, and Gewapend Beton. There are two notably sick highlights for me, one being the essay on Taqwacore, and the other article title "Invalid Punks" about fellow punks with physical . A two-page spread of record reviews round out the back of the zine. The whole thing is really punk looking and interesting regardless of the language barrier. Whether intentional or not, this zine is a reminder that punks do not have to gear themselves toward a Western audience, that punk has many native tongues and that punk has been and always will be happening internationally. Keep the community ties going, keep the written word alive! (DJ)
teenagewaste90@gmail.com /
teenagewasterecs.blogspot.com /
angryxkig.blogspot.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #106 / $2 US or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs

Boone has apparently been putting out this fanzine about punk in Columbia, MO for close to two decades. This issues has live show reviews, record reviews, a couple columns (both addressing politics), and two interviews. One is with Columbia's Task Force and another with Pierced Arrows. These interviews stood out with their easy pace, intimacy, and clever editing to keep them punchy. The downsides of this zine are mainly that the photos are all really pixilated and the writing can sometimes get a little frothy. Or rather, the author gets a little frothy, by which I mean that the columns and some of the reviews seem to have been written in a frenzy and I had to read them a couple of times to follow along with the prose. College towns are weird, so it was cool to kind of get a small look at a college town scene. If that sounds interesting to you, or if you have some kind of connection to Columbia, pick this up. (LP)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444
ttwn@hotmail.com /
thetroublewithnormalzine@gmail.com /
thetroublewithnormal.tripod.com

TRUST #149 / 2.50 Euros
12 x 7.5 – printed – 64 pgs

Ahh, Trust, the ultra slick fanzine that a lot of zine reviewers would probably like, but can't because it's all in fucking German! That aside, the content is not that hard to deduce. This issue has a huge special to celebrate 30 years of Dischord, including interviews with tons of folks from the label: Jeff Nelson, Ian MacKaye, the rhythm section of Fugazi, and Cynthia Connolly, to name a few (though not Guy Picciotto, which struck me as odd). A discography, photos, profiles of other Dischord folks (still no Guy), zine contributors' top five favorite releases from said label, and a write up on *Flex Your Head* as well. Also included are the regular bevvy of zine, record and demo reviews. I took this to my mom (hi Mom, thanks again) for some extra translation, but her German was too rusty to get more than that the first column is also about Dischord. One of the cooler things is that they did a round-table blind listening/reviewing of 7"s and published an abridged transcript. This zine is highly recommended for German-speaking punks and people who wanna see a "high budget" (read: they don't have to steal photocopies) zine with a different design aesthetic than *MRR*. Oh, did I mention that this zine is gorgeous? Well printed, high quality paper throughout, with large beautifully taken pictures. And everything is super sharp and minimalist. A treat for all. (LP)
Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany / www.trust-zine.de

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 24, #4 / $16 for 1 year sub
8.5 x 11 (folds out to larger) – printed – 8 pgs

Latest installment of this zine/newsletter put together by the Los Angeles chapter of Anti-Racist Action. This volume serves as a sort of "State of the Union," announcing the upcoming 25th anniversary of the organization/publication and providing updates about the group's actions and current needs. There are also many news articles and interviews that call attention to relevant issues relating to racism, organized resistance, the drug war, and foreign policy. The strongest emphasis in this edition is on prisoner's rights; there are several pieces from both current and ex-inmates detailing atrocities perpetrated by the American prison system. In addition, there is a poignant deconstruction of the recent Hollywood film, *The Help*, based on Kathryn Stockett's novel of the same name. *Turning The Tide* is also available in.pdf format for free on the A.R.A. website, so check it out and keep yourself informed. (KM)
www.antiracist.org

ZINE EXPLORER'S NOTEBOOK #2 / $1 ppd, trades, stamps, letters
8.5 x 11 – printed – 16 pgs

An extremely well-written review zine published by a lone editor. It begins with an intriguing editorial consisting of a personal anecdote, musing about typewriters, and an articulate analysis of our convoluted use of the word "printer." His reviews are thoughtful and articulate. An earnest appreciation for the material he covers permeates the entire zine. In some cases, he quotes passages from the zines being reviewed when he seems to believe the quote represents better than his own description—a very wise technique. This zine includes a letters section in which the editor publishes his responses as well. This dialog further reveals the editor's fervor for the zine community and alternative press.

Besides all of these positive aspects, the zine is a true pleasure to read because of the impeccably tasteful layout and typeface. I have gathered that the editor publishes a typography zine as well, and his interest in type and printing techniques is very evident. Every heading and change of typeface seems wisely calculated and deliberate. I certainly plan on submitting my zine to this publication, if only to see its name so masterfully printed. (SL)
PO Box 5291 / Richmond, VA / 23220

ZINE-O-FILE #1 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 40 pgs

I have never been to Toronto nor it's zine library but as I mentioned previously I'm really feeling Canadian publications these days. *Zine-O-File* is the collective output of the Toronto Zine Library volunteers. It features some zinester/ zine archive interviews, a piece on accountability within the "community" and a sort of academic piece on the intrinsic relationship between punk and zines. It's informative and full of really cool resources for archivists and laymen alike. (EC)
Toronto Zine Library c/o The Tranzac / 292 Brunswick Ave. / Toronto, ON M5S 2M7 Canada / torontozinelibrary@gmail.com / torontozinelibrary.org

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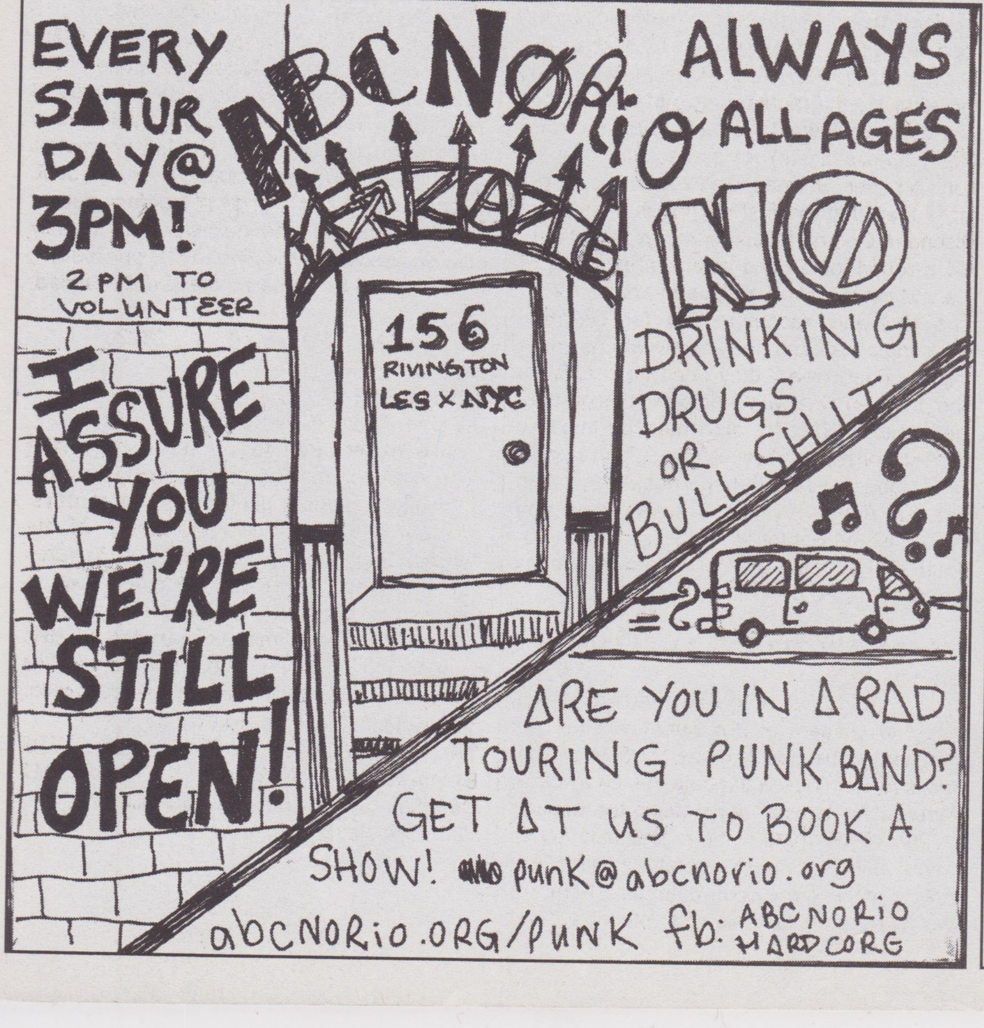

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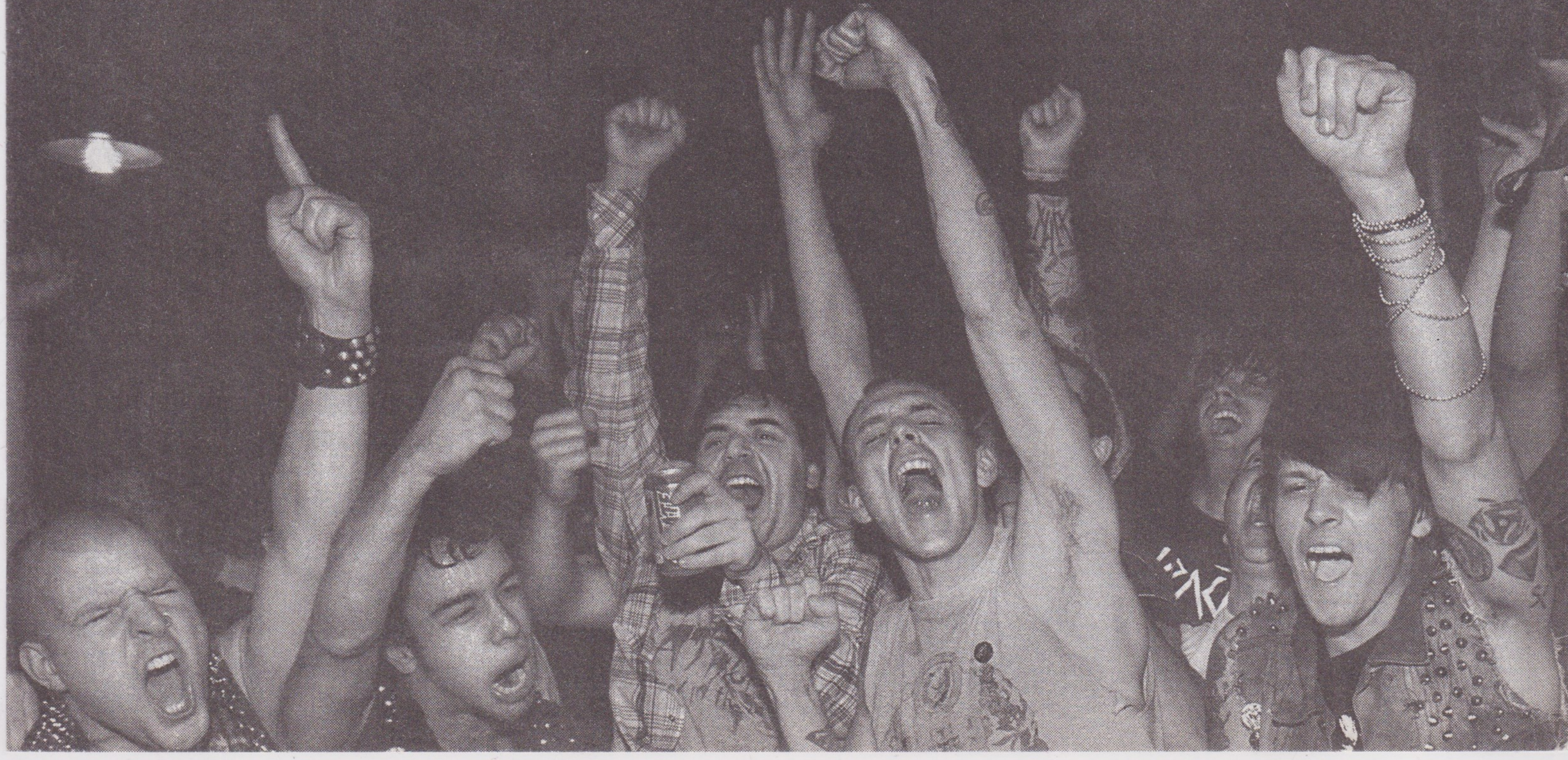EMAIL MRR@MAXIMUMROCKNROLL FOR AN APPLICATION!